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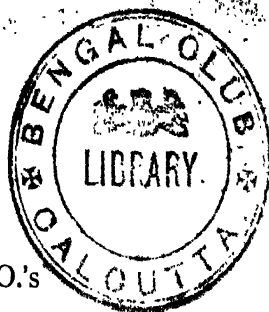
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IT was more than fifty years before the Christian era when Cicero, anxious to secure a laudatory record of his own consulate, pointed out with characteristic charm of language to the historian Lucceius how infinitely more attractive history could be made by being grouped round the deeds of some one central personality.

‘Si uno in argumento unaque in persona mens tua tota versabitur, cerno jam animo quanto omnia uberiora atque ornatiora futura sint. . . . At viri sæpe excellentis ancipites varique casus habent admirationem, exspectationem, lætitiā, molestiam, spem, timorem. Si vero exitu notabili concluduntur, expletur animus jucundissima lectoris voluptate.’

What the great orator, with his frank vanity, felt about himself—for he makes no secret as to who was to be the *una persona* and the *vir excellens* of the proposed history of Lucceius—is undoubtedly true of most great men. Their lives influence contemporary events far more than is known

at the time ; and to posterity history becomes more attractive, and not less profitable, when it is seen to centre round their characters and their achievements.

The history of British South Africa affords much scope for the Ciceronian method. It is full of striking personalities. Noteworthy indeed have been the closing scenes of many of their careers. To go no further back than this generation, how indissolubly is the name of Sir Bartle Frere identified with the Cape ! What do most people know of Zululand apart from Cetywayo, or of Matabeleland from Lobengula ? The stability of the Orange Free State has been due to the character of the late President Brand, and the fate of the Transvaal will for ever be associated with Paul Kruger. Public opinion has long ago stamped the name of Mr. Rhodes on the Chartered Company's territory ; and it is not rash to predict that Mr. Chamberlain's career at the Colonial Office will mark an epoch in Imperial policy in South Africa, of which the importance is not yet to be estimated. For the first time during many years there is a Colonial Minister who is keenly alive to the value of the colonies, instinct with sympathy for them, and gifted with the nerve and moral force to face responsibility. The spirit in which he understands his duties is well expressed in the striking declaration which he made not long ago at a colonial dinner : 'I decline to speak with bated breath of 'our colonies, to please any foreign Power'—and it has by this time been fully realised, not only throughout the Empire, but by all others whom it may concern, that now at last our colonial interests are in the hands of a man.

To the Africander who looks back upon the dreary record of Imperial blundering in South Africa, it will be hard to believe that there is a prospect of stable, firm, and consistent administration. Few Englishmen have any idea how amazing have been the changes and caprices—nay, the evasions—of British policy in South Africa since the beginning of the century. It is no exaggeration to say that there is little of what is now civilised territory which has not been, at one time or another, annexed, discarded, and then reannexed, or sometimes not reannexed at all ; so that no European and no native has been able to feel sure that, because he is a British subject to-day, he may not be forced to be something quite different to-morrow. For instance, the Cape Colony was annexed to the Empire in 1795. It was handed back to the Dutch in 1803, and reannexed in 1806. Natal was occupied by British troops in 1838,

then deliberately left to the emigrant Boers, and finally declared a British colony in 1842. In 1848 the Orange Free State was forcibly annexed to the Empire, and in 1854 handed back to the Boers. The Transvaal Boers were declared an independent Republic by the British Government in 1852; their country was annexed in 1877, and in 1881 it was re-granted its independence.

Over the native territories the ebb and flow of British jurisdiction has been not less remarkable. The record of our dealings with Swaziland, Zululand, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and the Transkeian territories is bewildering in its want of any intelligible principle. This has been due often to the well-intentioned incapacity of colonial secretaries, sometimes to the exigencies of party politics in England; and occasionally, it is to be feared, native interests have been used as a pawn in the game of South African politics.

Zululand must produce reflexions as little satisfactory to the British conscience. The justice of the original attack, in 1879, upon Cetywayo will always be a matter for controversy. What cannot be doubted is that, having destroyed the whole machinery of native government, we were bound to provide a substitute for it. If the war was unjust, this obligation became the more imperative. We accordingly deported the legitimate king, Cetywayo, and upon giving a solemn pledge that he should never be allowed to return, we induced several of his subordinate chiefs to divide the government of the country between them. It is hardly credible, but yet it is a fact, that within three years this pledge of the British Government had been thrown to the winds, and the deported Cetywayo was dropped down into the midst of the unfortunate chiefs, who, from his very natural point of view, had usurped his authority in a flagrant manner. Civil war and anarchy followed, 'as the night the day.' Part of the Zulus flocked to the king; and part adhered to the most able of the chiefs, Zibebu. The king's party was defeated, and Cetywayo himself died; and then his son, Dinizulu, called in a party of Boers to take revenge upon the victorious Zibebu. The British Government looked callously on while the Boers overthrew the loyal chief Zibebu, seized a large tract of the country, and obtained the protection of the Transvaal Government. Eventually the fairest part of Zululand was annexed to the Transvaal; and the Zulus, like the Swazies, suffered bitterly for their reliance upon British promises. It remains only to add that so much of Zululand as was not absorbed by the

Boers was tardily annexed to the British Empire about eight years ago.

Southern Bechuanaland was occupied by British troops and police from 1878 to 1881, and was then abandoned to become the happy hunting-ground of unscrupulous land-pirates from all parts of South Africa, who played off one unfortunate Bechuana chief against another. In 1884 the lawlessness had culminated in the establishment of two mushroom Republics, called Stellaland and Goshen, by which the trade route between the Cape and the interior was completely barred. This led to Sir Charles Warren's expedition, and the annexation of British (or Southern) Bechuanaland to the Empire. Last year this country was incorporated with the Cape Colony.

Basutoland, as a political entity, was the result of a treaty between the British Government and a very remarkable native chief, Moshesh, in 1843. In 1854 came the abandonment by Great Britain of the Orange River Free State, and the legacy to the Free State people of a quarrel with the Basutos about the boundary between the Free State and Basutoland. For years, consequently, there was chronic war between the Free State Boers and the Basutos. At length, in 1868, the British Government, which a few years before had washed its hands both of Boers and Basutos, suddenly stepped in and proclaimed Basutoland to be British territory. For some years afterwards Basutoland was under the control of an Imperial agent, supported by a small police force; then it was annexed to Cape Colony. In 1884 it was disannexed from the colony, and it is now governed (and most successfully) by an Administrator acting under the High Commissioner. It has been divided into magisterial districts, and order is maintained by a native police officered by Englishmen.

As to the native territories which lie between the Fish River and Natal, and which are now all part of the Cape Colony, it would be impossible here to detail the fluctuations of British policy as to the extension and withdrawal of jurisdiction over them. Suffice it to say, that the policy was such as to produce Kaffir wars in 1835, in 1846, in 1850, and in 1877; and that the life of a colonist, whom fate had placed on the eastern frontier, was, from its insecurity, almost intolerable.

For some thirty years after the British occupation of South Africa all the Boers were British subjects, living within the limits of the then Cape Colony. But about the year 1836

large bodies of them left the colony, and emigrated to what is now Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. It was then, and for long continued to be, the theory of the British Government that these emigrant Boers could not cast off their allegiance, and that, no matter whither they went, they must be prevented from setting up independent governments. Accordingly the Republics established by the Boers in Natal and in the Free State were successively overthrown. The same policy was for some time pursued towards the Transvaal Boers. Yet the countries occupied by these Boers were rescued by heroic sacrifices on their part from the barbarous and devastating rule of the Zulus and Matabele, who then possessed, though in greater perfection, the same highly organised military system found to be so formidable by our own troops a few years ago. Mr. Theal, the eminent historian of South Africa, has described, in eloquent language, the hardships encountered by these emigrant Boers, and the heroism with which they faced such bloodthirsty savages as Dingaan, the king of the Zulus, and Moselikatse, the king of the Matabele. Few in numbers, and having to protect their wives and families, they yet managed to drive off the hordes sent against them. But what did it avail them? How far soever they fought their way into the wilds, the heavy hand of the British Government followed them. The Boers fought against Great Britain for their independence in Natal, but were eventually beaten. They fought for the Orange Free State, and finally won it. With what brilliant success they have in our own time fought for the Transvaal no Englishman can forget.

The spirit which imbued the emigrant Boers is well seen in the solemn declaration put forth by them when they left the Cape Colony in 1836. After mentioning how grievous had been their losses from the absence of protection against Kaffir depredations, and from the manner in which the emancipation of slaves had been carried out, they conclude:—

‘We quit this colony under the full assurance that the English Government has nothing more to require of us, and will allow us to govern ourselves without its interference in the future.

‘We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth, in which we have suffered enormous losses and continual vexation, and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory; but we go forth with a firm reliance in an all-seeing and merciful God, whom we shall always fear and humbly endeavour to obey.’

Prejudice has often represented these Boers as mere slave-

holders, anxious to prey upon the native tribes without interference. Let us hear, as to their character, the evidence of an unimpeachable witness, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the then British Governor of the Cape Colony. In a despatch written by him to the Secretary of State on July 29, 1837, he speaks of the Boers who were then emigrating from the colony as 'a brave, patient, industrious, orderly, and religious people, the cultivators, the defenders, and the tax-con-tributors of the country.' The causes of the emigration he declares to be 'the insecurity of life and property occasioned by the recent measures [of the British Government], inadequate compensation for the loss of slaves, and despair of obtaining recompense for the ruinous losses by the Kaffir invasion.'

It is exceedingly important to get a clear idea of the nature and temperament of these Boers, if we are to deal successfully with the Transvaal problem of to-day. They come of a race and religion and character common to a large proportion of the people of England and Scotland. They are the descendants of the men who withstood the whole power of Spain under Philip II., and laid their country under water rather than submit to Louis XIV. The people of the Transvaal especially represent those of the emigrant Boers who most sturdily resented British rule, and who, when they found no escape from it either in Natal or the Free State, moved still further across the Vaal, and finally, in 1852, wrung from the British Government an unwilling assent to their independence.

The Orange River Free State, or sovereignty, as it was then called, was annexed to the Empire in 1848, and remained British territory for six years, when it was abandoned under circumstances which, in many respects, recall the lamentable way in which the Transvaal was abandoned in 1881. There was not, indeed, any humiliation to British arms in connexion with the Free State. It was occupied after the successful action at Boomplaats. It was abandoned by the spontaneous and deliberate act of the British Government on the homely ground of pounds, shillings, and pence. But there was the same hopeless vacillation of British policy; there was the same absolute indifference to responsibilities and engagements acquired during the occupation to loyal subjects in the country. During the six years' occupation the Boers were divided into two parties—those who were opposed to British rule and those who supported it. But the latter were actually

the more numerous. Thus, when the Imperial Government proposed to abandon the country, the majority of the Boers were firmly opposed to the abandonment, and sent delegates to England to petition the House of Commons against it. And then ensued a truly discreditable state of things for the British Government. The British Commissioner, Sir George Clark, sent out from England to effect the abandonment, was driven to denounce publicly the loyal majority, and to encourage actively the anti-British minority who desired to establish an independent Boer Republic. He spoke of the loyalists as 'obstructionists,' and of the republicans as the 'well-disposed.' Finally, the consent of the majority to the abandonment was obtained only by the free use of gold, which was distributed under the euphemistic name of 'compensation for losses.'

The dealings, however, of the British Government with the Orange Free State did not stop there. In 1869 and 1870 diamonds began to be worked in the district south of the Vaal, which is now Kimberley, but which was then part of the Free State territory. Claiming though a native chief, whose title turned out to be thoroughly bad, the British Government stepped in and annexed the diamond fields, in spite of the protests of Mr. Brand, the President of the Free State. It was not till some five or six years later, when President Brand actually came to England, and laid the Free State case in all its strength before Lord Carnarvon, that tardy justice was at length done by England paying 90,000*l.* to the Free State Government for the valuable mineral-bearing country which she had acquired under circumstances so far from satisfactory.

As with the abandonment of the Transvaal in 1881, so in 1854 when the Free State was discarded by the British Government, a convention was concluded with the Boers. This Convention of Bloemfontein contained nothing in terms which reserved any suzerain rights to Great Britain. Yet it is clear that the British authorities did not regard it as preventing their interference with the Free State when, as they thought, the interests of South Africa demanded it. The Free State war with the Basutos was peremptorily stopped in 1868 by the British Government, because, as the then Secretary of State said, he 'had come to the conclusion that the peace and welfare of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa would be best promoted' by accepting the Basutos as British subjects.

The same attitude on the part of the British Government

was more clearly defined by Lord Carnarvon in his discussions with President Brand as to the right of the Imperial Government to annex the Kimberley diamond fields, his view being that the British Government, as the Paramount Power in South Africa, might interfere in the affairs of the Boer Republics whenever the safety or wellbeing of South Africa demanded it. And in reply to a request from the Free State for arbitration, the answer was 'that England cannot allow 'foreign arbitration with South Africa, because serious 'embarrassments might arise therefrom.'

The Transvaal Republic was originally formed of Boers who emigrated across the Vaal, or across the Drakensburgh Mountains, between 1836 and 1852, to escape the British Government, established either in the Cape Colony, the Orange River Sovereignty, or Natal. But it was not till 1852 that the British Government recognised their right to renounce their allegiance as British subjects. By the Sand River Convention of that year the British Government permitted them to set up an independent State called the South African Republic, in what is now known as the Transvaal. At that time there were about five thousand families of Europeans in the country. To these people the British Government 'guaranteed in the fullest manner . . . the 'right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves 'according to their own laws, without any interference on the 'part of the British Government.' They further guaranteed 'that no encroachment should be made by the said Government on the territory north of the Vaal river.' But they forbade any form of slavery from being practised in the Transvaal, and they prohibited the Boers from trading in war material with the native tribes on both sides of the Vaal. Guarantees and stipulations to the same effect were contained in the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854, by which the Free State Boers regained their independence of Great Britain. It is contended by the Boers that both these treaties operated as a complete abdication on the part of the British Government of any right of future interference in their concerns. But it is clear from what has already been said that they have not been so understood by the Imperial authorities. As early as 1858, when the two Republics proposed to unite, their Governments were informed by Sir George Grey, the then High Commissioner, that if they did so the Conventions of Bloemfontein and Sand River would be annulled, and that the British Government would form no fresh convention with the new State.

The Transvaal Republic had from its birth an unfortunate career. The Boers were so hopelessly divided amongst themselves that they soon split up into no fewer than four different Republics, having their respective seats of government at Potchefstroom, Zoutpansberg, Lydenburg, and Utrecht. At last civil war broke out between the conflicting factions, and it was not till May 1864 that the Republic became a united one under the presidency of Martinus Pretorius, the Commandant-General being the now President, Mr. Paul Kruger. In the year 1857 a quarrel broke out between the Boers of the Free State and of the Transvaal, and a force actually marched from the latter country into Free State territory, where a fight between the burghers of these two kindred States (who are reported to have just concluded a close alliance against Great Britain) was only just averted. From 1864 till 1877, the date of the British annexation, the Transvaal was in continual and increasing difficulties. Mr. Theal thus describes the condition of the Boers in 1868 :—

‘A generation had grown up without a knowledge of books, or of events beyond their own little circle. The rivers were unbridged, there were no public offices worthy of the name, the treasury was always empty, and the salaries of the officials, trifling as they were, could seldom or never be paid when they fell due. Commerce was carried on chiefly by means of barter, as gold and silver were exceedingly scarce.’

In 1873 President Pretorius was succeeded by President Burgers, who endeavoured to rehabilitate the State by going to Holland to raise a loan of 90,000*l.*; but in his absence the Bapedi tribe, under their chief Sekukuni, rose against the Boers. The President returned to lead a large commando of burghers against the rebellious chief, but the expedition entirely failed. Then the Volksraad was specially summoned, and heavy taxation was imposed to meet the expenditure necessary for the war. At this point Mr. Theal may be again quoted :—

‘The country was quite unable to bear this strain. The ordinary charges of government and the interest on the public debt could not be met, much less an additional burden. And so the whole administrative machinery broke down. The Republic was really in a pitiable state, without money or an army, with rebellion triumphant, and a general election approaching that was feared might be attended with civil war.’

It was in this critical state of things, and early in the year 1877, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the British

Commissioner, entered the Transvaal attended by a small police force, and marched unopposed into Pretoria.

It soon appeared that there was a section of the Boers strongly averse to the annexation. Within a few months of its taking place, Mr. Paul Kruger and Dr. Jorissen started for England to protest against it. Lord Carnarvon, however, seems to have reconciled these gentlemen to the inevitable; for after an interview had taken place between them and the Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon wrote:—

‘They further assured me of their determination to use their best endeavours to induce their fellow-countrymen to accept cheerfully the present state of things, and of their desire, should they be permitted to do so, to serve Her Majesty faithfully in any capacity for which they might be judged eligible.’ (Blue Book, C. 1691, p. 146.)

That these protestations were then genuine may be assumed from the facts that Dr. Jorissen remained Attorney-General under the British Administration, and that Mr. Kruger not only continued to draw his salary (with an increase) as a member of the old executive, but spoke to a meeting of Boers on his return to the Transvaal in cordial terms of the conduct of the British Government.*

The annexation of the Transvaal may have been premature; from a tactical point of view it probably was. That it was unjustifiable can hardly be maintained. It is beyond controversy that the Boer Government was impotent and bankrupt, and that the people were in serious danger from the native rising in the north and of a Zulu invasion from the east. If these dreaded catastrophes had occurred, the results would have been felt all over South Africa, and at the very least a general feeling of deep insecurity would have been created in the British colonies.

But the British Government in 1877 seems to have been cursed with its traditional ineptitude in the management of South African affairs. Instead of adapting the new administration in the Transvaal to Boer ideas, instead of affording the Boers the widest self-government compatible with the condition of an Imperial province, the country was ruled like a Crown colony, the Boers were shut out from participation in the conduct of affairs, and the promises of autonomy which had been held out to them were not fulfilled.

In June 1878 a second Boer deputation, consisting of Mr. Paul Kruger and Mr. Joubert, went to England to

* See Nixon’s ‘Complete Story of the Transvaal,’ p. 101.

petition Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the new Colonial Secretary, for a reversal of the annexation. Sir Michael assured them that it was irrevocable.

In September 1879 Sir Garnet Wolseley came to the Transvaal as High Commissioner, and at public dinners at Wakkerstroom and Pretoria announced that the Transvaal would remain British territory 'as long as the sun shone.' He issued a public proclamation to the same effect.

Then came renewed declarations by Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach that the country would never be abandoned by Great Britain, the latter laying particular stress upon 'the interests of the European settlers who have 'acquired property in the province in the full belief that 'the annexation will be maintained.'* In the same despatch the Colonial Secretary pointed out that '*the power and 'authority of England had been for many years paramount 'in South Africa, and that neither by the Sand River Convention nor at any other time had she surrendered the 'right and duty of requiring the Transvaal to be governed 'with a view to the common safety of the various European 'communities.'* This was only a fresh assertion of the practical suzerainty of the British Government over the South African States, which, as has been mentioned, had been claimed by preceding colonial secretaries.

At this crisis, however, the Boer agitation received a powerful and fatal stimulus. Mr. Gladstone began his Midlothian campaign against the Government of Lord Beaconsfield. His language clearly conveyed to the Boers that he thought the annexation of their country to be indefensible. This was in November 1879. The general election was imminent. The Boers waited breathlessly for the result. By May 1880 Mr. Gladstone had been returned to power at the head of a large majority. The Boers were triumphant. A letter was at once despatched to Mr. Gladstone by Mr. Paul Kruger and Mr. Joubert reminding him of his sympathy with them, and appealing to him to restore them their country.

A reply came, publicly and privately, without delay. On May 20 the retention of the Transvaal was publicly announced on behalf of the Government, and in Mr. Gladstone's private letter to Mr. Kruger and Mr. Joubert he said:—

'We have to deal with a state of things which has existed for a considerable period, during which obligations have been contracted,

* Blue Book, C. 2482, p. 378.

especially, though not exclusively, towards the native population, which cannot be set aside. Looking to all the circumstances, both of the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa . . . our judgement is that the Queen cannot be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal.'

The official telegram from the Imperial Government which was published in South Africa was: 'Under no circumstances can the Queen's authority in the Transvaal be 'relinquished.'

The Boers were struck dumb. For the moment it was a staggering blow. But these were men who, and whose fathers before them, had gone through fire and water for their country. They were many of them the very men who had 'trekked' patiently and persistently from one part of South Africa to another until they reached the distant country beyond the Vaal, where they were at last permitted by the British Government to breathe God's air in the freedom for which they longed. Before the end of the year 1880 they had risen for their liberty, and it was not a 'modern' rising, created by cheque-books or stimulated by border raids. The leaders placed themselves in the forefront of the battle, and before the end of February 1881 they had defeated in no less than four engagements the British troops sent against them. What followed is engraven indelibly in the minds of all intelligent citizens of the Empire. The crowning victory of the Boers at Majuba worked as miraculous a conversion of Mr. Gladstone as did the battle of Tolbiac on King Clovis. The scales fell from his eyes. The relinquishment of the Queen's authority in the Transvaal, which only a few months before had been impossible, became now possible, imperative, even praiseworthy. The obligations contracted towards the loyalists, and especially the natives, which in 1880 were irresistible, had in 1881 lost their binding character. The interests of South Africa, which the day before Majuba had demanded the entry of the Transvaal into a British confederation, pointed as clearly on the morrow of that disaster to the exclusion of the country from the Empire. To the colonists and natives there was left the bitter reflection that it was not safe to rely upon British pledges, however solemn or however often repeated.

It was at this low ebb of British fortunes that Sir Hercules Robinson came to South Africa as High Commissioner, and two or three years later Mr. Cecil Rhodes first became prominent in Cape politics. To these two men is due the

fact, the remarkable fact, that within a dozen years of the stupendous blundering over the Transvaal perpetrated by the British authorities, the stability and administrative reputation of the Imperial Government were again built up upon firm foundations.

There has been much discussion as to the true effect of the London Convention which was concluded between the Boers and Lord Derby in 1884. An accurate knowledge of the circumstances under which it was agreed to removes all doubt. The Pretoria Convention of 1881 placed the Transvaal Boers under an express suzerainty, controlled their diplomatic intercourse with foreign Powers, and established a British Resident with the right to interfere in the internal policy of the Boers in regard to the natives. The Boers came to London in 1884, with the declared object of getting rid of these, to them, irksome provisions, and they entirely succeeded in doing so, the only reservation made on the part of the British Government in the new Convention being a right to veto any formal treaty made by the Boers with a foreign Power.

The construction of the Convention, however, is of secondary importance, since the right of the British Government to interfere in the Transvaal depends not upon any treaty, but upon its position as the Paramount Power in South Africa. This paramountcy is based upon the preponderance of possession, the corresponding preponderance of responsibility, and the vast expenditure of blood and money by which such a preponderance has been gained. It would be well under the mark to suggest fifty millions as the sum of money which it has cost the British Empire to extend its rule over all the once barbarous territory lying to the east of the early Cape Colony, and stretching from the Great Fish river up to the Portuguese boundary, over Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Matabeleland, and over the two Boer States from which its rule was subsequently withdrawn. But the British blood that has been shed is a far graver item in the account than the money which has been spent. There have been no less than five Kaffir wars waged against the natives on the south-east, there have been two against the Basutos, two against the Zulus, and one against the Matabele, not to mention those against the Boers. The whole coast-line from the mouth of the Orange River to St. Lucia Bay has been protected solely by British fleets.

The true view of the various conventions agreed to between the Transvaal Boers and the Imperial Government in

1852, 1881, and 1884 respectively, is that they are statements of the limitations which the Paramount Power has seen fit to place, in the absence of very special circumstances, upon its own actions. They are each and all subject to the reservation that they may be disregarded when the supreme interests of British South Africa so demand. In the British Imperial Government there must be always inherent what is known to international lawyers as a 'residuary jurisdiction,' liable to be invoked, indeed, only under special conditions, but certainly not to be disturbed or affected by conventions such as have been come to with the Transvaal Boers. Whether the character of the Government or of the laws of the Transvaal is at this moment such as to call for the exercise of that 'residuary jurisdiction' will have to be presently considered. But it has already been shown that on two or three occasions at least since the conclusion of the Bloemfontein and Sand River Conventions the British Government has claimed and exercised this jurisdiction in regard to the Boer States. Even Lord Derby did not lose sight of this; for in 1883 he pointedly reminded President Kruger and his colleagues in the deputation that *the Sand River Convention, like the Convention of Pretoria, was not a treaty between two contracting Powers, but was a declaration made by the Queen, and accepted by certain persons at that time her subjects, of the conditions under which and the extent to which her Majesty could permit them to manage their own affairs without interference.*

In the course of his reply to this clear assertion of British paramountcy, President Kruger said:—

‘The deputation would even go further, and declare what has already been repeatedly and openly declared by the government and people of the South African Republic, that on their part there is no objection to give their favourable consideration to any scheme of confederation between the Colonies and States of South Africa emanating from Her Majesty’s Government, and wherein the interests of the Imperial Government are duly recognised, even in so far as a British Protectorate might hereafter be required against any attempt on the part of transmarine Powers to take possession of South Africa by force of arms.’ (See Blue Book, C. 3947, pp. 6 and 8.)

Nor was this a new position for the Boers to take up, for in 1877 the Boer Volksraad had actually passed a resolution signifying their readiness for a closer union with the British colonies in the interests of South Africa. It seems a thousand pities to the real friends of the Boers that President Kruger has of late been persuaded to adopt a very

different attitude. There is so much natural admiration felt for the magnificent courage shown by the Boers in fighting for their independence, that no Englishman who appreciates determination and pluck would wish to interfere with the legitimate rights of the Transvaal. Why should not the President revert to the Boer position of 1834 and 1877, and by a frank recognition of British paramountcy obtain from the Imperial Government a definite guarantee of the autonomy of his country?

The President must not forget that, whatever wrongs the Boers may have suffered in connexion with the British annexation of their country, they also gained solid advantages. When their country was annexed it was bankrupt, absolutely impotent, and in serious danger from Sekukuni in the north and Cetywayo in the east. When their country was handed back to them the power of both these chiefs had been broken, and all danger to the Transvaal removed. This was done by British troops, and principally by British money. The debts of the Transvaal Government, which were extinguished during the British occupation, amounted to over 140,000*l.* At the time of the London Convention in 1884 the indebtedness of the Transvaal Government to Great Britain was nearly 390,000*l.* It was then reduced, *ex gratia*, to 250,000*l.* In 1884, at President Kruger's request, the British Government agreed to an extension of the western border, by which the Transvaal gained an additional strip of country 130 miles long by 20 miles broad.* Mr. Kruger's Government solemnly pledged themselves to respect the boundaries of their country as laid down in the London Convention, and to take active steps to prevent encroachments upon the Bechuanas on the west or upon the Zulus on the east. But the ink of the Convention was hardly dry before what is now British Bechuanaland was overrun from the Transvaal by hundreds of land-pirates, who set up mushroom Republics. The British Commissioners sent to deal with this were set at nought, and President Kruger actually at one time took the Republics formally under his protection. This early infraction of the London Convention led to Sir Charles Warren's expedition for the purpose of removing the freebooters protected by President Kruger, rescuing the Bechuanas, and securing for British trade the route to the north; and it cost the British taxpayer over one million sterling.

* See Blue Book, C. 3947, pp. 46 and 30.

The encroachments of Boers on the east, in defiance of the Convention, were as marked and more successful; for, as already mentioned, a large proportion of Zululand became part of President Kruger's domains. As lately as 1891 there was an attempted incursion of "Boers into the Chartered Company's territory, which was stopped, happily without bloodshed, by the Imperial Border Police under Sir F. Carrington and Major Goold Adams, acting under the directions of the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch. Therefore President Kruger has not been content with the autonomous rights granted him over a country half as large again as Great Britain. He has been constantly extending his borders. His internal government has been based on principles wholly alien to modern ideas of freedom, and particularly harsh to English-speaking people. He has entered into close relations with at least one foreign Power, in breach surely of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the Convention. Is it not time, then, for President Kruger, while rightly protesting against such outrages as Jameson's raid, to consider how far he has himself respected the rights of the Paramount Power in South Africa?

Even if the relations between the British and Boer Governments were those of two equal, independent States, there would be certain conditions under which, according to the law of civilised nations, British interference in the domestic politics of the Transvaal would be clearly sanctioned. In Mr. Hall's authoritative treatise on international law occurs the following definition of those conditions (section 87):—

'Broadly, all persons entering a foreign country must submit to the laws of that country: provided that the laws are fairly administered, they cannot, as a rule, complain of the effects upon themselves, however great may be the practical injustice resulting to them. It is only when these laws are not fairly administered, or when they provide no remedy for wrongs, or when they are such—as might happen in very exceptional cases—as to constitute grievous oppression in themselves, that the State to which the individual (foreigner) belongs has the right to interfere on his behalf. . . . While, however, it is settled that, as a general rule, a State must be allowed to work out its internal changes in its own fashion, so long as its struggles do not actually degenerate into internecine war . . . intervention for the purpose of checking gross tyranny, or of helping the efforts of a people to free itself, is very commonly regarded without disfavour.'

Judged by the above principles, many of the causes of the complaints made by the Uitlanders against Boer ad-

ministration could hardly justify intervention from outside. The adoption of a commercial policy hostile to British interests, the establishment of burdensome monopolies, the corruption of officials, the interference by the Executive or Volksraad with the independence of the Courts would come under this head. But consider the action of President Kruger with regard to the two matters known in South Africa as the 'commandeering' question and the 'drifts' question!

In the first case President Kruger claimed and exercised the right to inflict compulsory military service on British subjects, to whom he denied the most valued civil rights; and men who were deliberately shut out from all real share in the government of the country were dragged off to fight on its behalf against native tribes. Such action surely needs no comment. Of course, the British Government interfered to stop this, and, through Sir Henry Loch, insisted on British subjects being entitled to the same exemption from serving in the field as was accorded to subjects of other foreign countries.

The 'drifts' question was the result of equally high-handed conduct on President Kruger's part. In the summer of last year the Netherlands Railway—a pet German railway of the President's which connects Pretoria, Johannesburg, and the Free State border with Delagoa Bay—found itself, owing to the incompetence of its officials and general mismanagement, quite unable to deal with the traffic coming from the Cape and Free State to Johannesburg. Close, however, to the junction of the Free State and Netherlands Companies' lines there is a 'drift,' or ford, on the Vaal River, and this was turned to account by the owners of the delayed goods, which were transported in wagons across the 'drift,' and so brought on to Johannesburg. In order to put a stop to this, and force back the traffic so diverted at all costs to the Netherlands Railway, the Boer Government took the extreme step of blocking the drifts on October 1. This created a storm at Johannesburg; for, as stated in the 'Cape Times,' 'the congestion of traffic, which had before been very great, became intolerable; hundreds of tons of goods, some of them perishable, were accumulated at the river. Rand merchants were without stocks, and a deadlock seemed imminent.' This arbitrary measure was persisted in till a clear intimation was received from the Imperial Government that there had been a breach by the Boer Government of the 13th article of the London Convention which could not be allowed.

It is obvious that complete sympathy could hardly be expected between a Boer Government selected from a few thousand farmers of limited education and narrow views, and a gold-mining population of a different race, with progressive ideas, and coming from countries politically the most free in the world. A want of sympathy, however, between the governing and the governed classes does not of itself justify rebellion on the part of the latter. In this instance there are several admitted facts which go some way to make a strong case for the Uitlanders. It is safe to say, without pledging ourselves to figures about which people are not agreed, that the Uitlanders largely outnumber the Boers, that they are the owners of a very large proportion of the wealth and land of the country, that they provide the greatest portion of the national revenue, and that they are taxed by a Volksraad in which they have and can have no representation. To this may be added that their language is forbidden in the Legislature, in all the courts of justice, and in such municipal bodies as exist. Further, that their children can receive no education in their own tongue, and that no public meeting for political objects can be held without the sanction of the Government. The position is accentuated when it is remembered that the people thus taxed without votes, and whose language is thus tabooed, belong for the most part to what is the Paramount Power in South Africa, and to what is a dominant race throughout the world. It seems an almost unanswerable case, and one that need not have been spoilt by resorting to such a barbarous remedy as a border raid; but the other side, of course, has to be heard.

Shortly put, the plea of the Boer Government is self-defence. The Boers say that if they granted the franchise to the Uitlanders they would be committing political suicide, and that the first act of the new ~~waters~~ would be to overthrow the existing form of government. President Kruger maintains that he has been anxious to treat the Uitlanders fairly, but that he cannot trust them, and that the legislation passed by the Volksraad adverse to the Uitlanders has been forced upon him by their antagonistic attitude. He points to the incidents connected with Sir Henry Loch's visits to the Transvaal, when the President was hissed, and when on one occasion a man, waving a British flag, got on the box of the President's carriage. He complains of British subjects objecting to military service and of their constant appeals for Imperial intervention on their behalf.

The Uitlanders do not admit the truth of these charges. They expressly repudiate any desire to change the Republican form of government, and they say that their antagonism to President Kruger is the result of his refusal to remedy their grievances, and of the open contempt with which the Volksraad has treated their constitutional appeals for the franchise. Of course the truth does not lie entirely on one side; but even if it be assumed that the Boer contention is true that the Uitlanders would use the franchise, if they got it, to upset the Republican form of government, and generally to effect radical changes out of harmony with Boer ideas, still the Boers are from forty to fifty thousand only in numbers, and are not increasing, the Uitlanders are certainly double that number, and are admittedly increasing very rapidly, so that by the end of this century, according to the estimate of Dr. Rutherford Harris, they will have reached nearly a quarter of a million, their wealth and property increasing at the same time. Can any sensible person doubt that when the preponderance of the Uitlander over the Boer reaches that proportion, or anything like it, political rights must either be granted to the Uitlanders or will be taken by force? If this is so, is the Paramount Power which is responsible for the general peace of South Africa to sit still and calmly await another outbreak? Surely not; and the just view of the Imperial Government can hardly be better expressed than it is in Mr. Chamberlain's telegraphic despatch to Sir Hercules Robinson on January 13, which contains the following passage:—

‘The majority of the population [of the Transvaal] is composed of Uitlanders, and their complete exclusion from any share in the government of the country is an admitted grievance which is publicly recognised as such by the friends of the Republic as well as by the opinion of civilised Europe. There will always be a danger of internal disturbance so long as this grievance exists, and I desire that you will earnestly impress on President Kruger the wisdom of making concessions in the interests alike of the South African Republic and of South Africa as a whole. There is a possibility that the President might be induced to rely on the support of some foreign Power in resisting the grant of reforms, or in making demands upon Her Majesty's Government, and in view of this I think it well to inform you that Great Britain will resist at all costs the interference of any foreign Power in the affairs of the South African Republic. . . .

‘Her Majesty's Government have no reason, at the present moment, to anticipate any conflict of interest with foreign Powers; but I think it right for you to know that Great Britain will not tolerate any change in her relations with the Republic. and that, while

loyally respecting its internal independence, subject to the Conventions she will maintain her position as the Paramount Power in South Africa, and especially the provisions of Article IV. of the Convention of 1884. . . . You will recollect that promises have before been made to the Uitlanders, which unfortunately have not been fulfilled. I trust the President will now see his way to repeat these promises to you as the representative of the Paramount Power; and in that case he may rely upon the sincere friendship of Her Majesty's Government, and on their determination that all external action against the independence of the Republic shall be prevented.' (Blue Book, C. 7933, p. 51.)

It appears that President Kruger dislikes Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion of Home Rule for the Rand; but he has declared his intention of giving Johannesburg a municipality and of remedying the educational grievance. As to the franchise, let him begin by giving it at once to all those of the Uitlanders who are Afrianders born, or who, by taking the oath of allegiance to the Republic, are willing to surrender their allegiance to the mother-country. Even this would be much less than he promised in 1881; for in the Blue Book, C. 3219, p. 25, the following conversation is recorded between Sir H. Robinson, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Mr. Kruger:—

'*Sir H. Robinson*: Before annexation had British subjects complete freedom of trade throughout? Were they on the same footing as citizens of the Transvaal?

'*Mr. Kruger*: They were on the same footing as the burghers. There was not the slightest difference in accordance with the Sand River Convention.

'*Sir H. Robinson*: I presume you will not object to that continuing?

'*Mr. Kruger*: No. There will be equal protection for anybody.

'*Sir Evelyn Wood*: And equal privileges?

'*Mr. Kruger*: We make no difference as far as burgher rights are concerned. There may perhaps be some slight difference in the case of a young person who has just come into the country.'

It is to be observed that by the Convention of 1894, concluded between Sir Henry Loch and President Kruger, under the provisions of which the Boer administration was, in 1895, extended over Swaziland, the full political privileges of a Transvaal burgher are reserved for *bona fide* white male residents, and equal rights are secured for the English and Dutch languages in all the courts of justice, so that Uitlanders in Swaziland are entitled to the rights denied to Uitlanders on the Rand. In the Orange Free State an Englishman may become a burgher, with a right to the

franchise, by residence in the country for one year, if he has the requisite property qualification.

It was not till 1884 that Germany actually established herself in South Africa. But in 1880 a merchant of Bremen, Herr Luderitz, purchased from a native chief a strip of land on the coast of Damaraland about one hundred and fifty miles long. Damaraland and Great Namaqualand lie on the south-west of Africa, between the mouth of the Orange river, which is the northern boundary of the Cape Colony, and the river Cunene, which is the southern boundary of the Portuguese possessions. A great part of them consists of barren waterless country. There is one valuable harbour on the coast, Walfisch Bay, which was annexed in 1877 to the British Empire, and in 1884 was added to the Cape Colony. To the south of Walfisch Bay is a smaller harbour called Angra Pequena. This harbour was comprised in the strip of coast bought by Herr Luderitz. In June 1884 a German protectorate was proclaimed over Angra Pequena, and German jurisdiction has been since extended over all Damaraland and Great Namaqualand. The circumstances under which the German protectorate came about at Angra Pequena reflect little credit on British diplomacy, which, however, was seriously hampered by the unfortunate conduct of the Government of Cape Colony. It is a fact that for something like four years the German Government endeavoured, without success, to obtain a clear answer to the simple question whether Great Britain claimed Angra Pequena, and if so, whether she would afford protection to German settlers there. First, in 1880, Lord Granville replied that the British Government could not consider territory beyond the Orange River as under its authority. Then, in 1883, he informed Count Münster that, though the Queen's sovereignty had not been proclaimed at Angra Pequena Bay, yet that no other Power could go thither without 'infringing the legitimate rights' of Great Britain. On December 31, 1883, the German Government asked on what such rights were based. No answer was forthcoming to this till June 1884, actually a few weeks after the Germans, their patience at last thoroughly exhausted, had sent a gunboat to Angra Pequena to place it under a German protectorate. Lord Granville then recognised the German rights over Angra Pequena, which were extended over all the unclaimed country up to the Cunene river, excluding Walfisch Bay. Suddenly, however, the Cape Government stepped in and proposed to assert jurisdiction over the same

country. This was, not quite unnaturally, resented by the German Government as an act of bad faith, and it was disallowed by the home authorities.

Not long after Germany desired to establish a protectorate over some of her subjects at St. Lucia Bay in Zululand, Lord Derby having publicly and persistently declined to annex it to the British Empire. Yet upon the rumour of the German intentions British authority was at once declared over it, without, so far as appears, any complaint from the German Government.

Commerce, however, was not forbidden, and it was with the full sanction of the British Government that in 1885 a commercial treaty was concluded between the Boers and the Germans, conceding to the latter the most-favoured-nation treatment and freedom of trade. Since that, no doubt, the Germans have been keen commercial rivals. They have taken advantage of President Kruger's anti-British tendencies to secure substantial benefits for their trade.

It is worth while, perhaps, to quote the most pronounced of the President's utterances in this regard. It was on January 27, 1895, the birthday of the German Emperor, that he spoke as follows:—

‘It is the spirit of loyalty which I admire in the Germans. They are under the laws, they work under the laws, they obey the laws, and they fell in the Kaffir war under the laws. All my subjects are not so minded. The English, for instance, although they behave themselves properly and are loyal to the State, always fall back upon England when it suits their purpose. Therefore I shall ever promote the interests of Germany, though it be but with the resources of a child, such as my land is considered. This child is now being trodden upon by one great Power, and the natural consequence is that it seeks protection from another. The time has come to knit ties of the closest friendship between Germany and the South African Republic—ties such as are natural between father and child.’

Such a speech, of course, aroused, both in South Africa and outside it, British susceptibilities, and led to immediate communications between the British and German Governments, evoking from the latter a definite statement of German policy in regard to the Transvaal. In February of last year Baron von Marschall, the German Foreign Secretary, told the British ambassador:—

‘Our policy simply aims at protecting against every attack those material interests which Germany has created by building railways, and by forming commercial ties in the Transvaal. These interests demand

the maintenance of the Transvaal as a self-dependent State in accordance with the Convention of 1884, and the preservation of the *status quo* as regards the railways and the harbour at Delagoa Bay.'

The Foreign Secretary went on to say, what he has since repeated, on February 13 last, in the German Parliament, that his Government would regard a Confederation of the South African Colonies and States as an alteration of the *status quo*, and that even a purely commercial federation meant 'politically a protectorate and economically a commercial monopoly for Cape Colony, and the exclusion of German trade.'

This is going far beyond the Boer position in 1884, when, as has been mentioned, President Kruger was willing to come into a British South African Confederation, and acknowledge a qualified British protectorate. It amounts, if taken literally, to a dictation to the Paramount Power in South Africa wholly unjustified by German trade interests, and would be putting a veto upon what has always been the avowed policy of the British Government. What alone the Germans have a right to demand is that in any scheme of confederation or other constitutional change which the Paramount Power may, in the general interests of South Africa, sanction, German treaties and rights and interests shall be respected.

The unnecessary and very maladroit telegram of the German Emperor to President Kruger on the subject of Dr. Jameson's raid has much to answer for. But its faults were on the surface, and the scare about the landing of German troops at Delagoa Bay to march into the Transvaal turns out to have been hardly justified. It appears from the German White Book laid before the Imperial Diet on February 12 that it was only after two urgent telegrams from the German Consul at Pretoria, representing the danger of the expected outbreak, that Baron von Marschall authorised the landing of, 'at the outside, fifty men, solely for the protection of the Consulate and of the life and property of German subjects.' This was not an unreasonable precaution, in view of the possibilities of anarchy and bloodshed represented to him, and is not consistent with any plan for serious armed intervention between the Boers and the Uitlanders.

It was under the auspices of Sir Hercules Robinson that in 1888 a treaty of amity was concluded between the British Government and Lobengula, the king of the Matabele, by which the latter agreed not to enter into correspondence

with any foreign Power against the wishes of the High Commissioner. In 1889, the year in which Sir H. Robinson left South Africa, the Imperial Government granted to the British South Africa Company a Royal Charter. In a farewell speech made at Capetown in that year, Sir Hercules spoke as follows:—

‘As Her Majesty’s High Commissioner, whilst striving to act with equal justice to all classes and races, I have endeavoured at the same time to establish on a broad and secure basis British authority as the Paramount Power in South Africa. To effect this I soon saw that a forward policy was indispensable; for if we did not advance, others would. At a very early period, therefore, of my administration, I cast longing eyes upon the high healthy central plateau to the north of the Cape Colony, which, as the gate to the interior of South and Central Africa, seemed to me of infinitely more importance than the fever-stricken mangrove swamps on the East coast, or the sandy waterless fringe on the West. For a time my advocacy was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness; but the ultimate result has been that, instead of the colony being, as it were, hidebound and shut in on the North by a foreign Power, we have to-day, in that direction, first, the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland, next, the British Protectorate extending to the 22nd degree of South latitude, and beyond it the exclusive sphere of British influence extending to the Zambesi.’

The proposed objects of the Company, for which a charter was obtained from the Imperial Government, were stated to be:—

(1) To extend northward the railway and telegraph systems in the direction of the Zambesi.

(2) To encourage emigration and colonisation.

(3) To promote trade and commerce.

(4) To develop and work minerals and other concessions under the management of one powerful organisation, thereby obviating conflicts and complications between the various interests that had been acquired within those regions, and securing to the native chiefs and their subjects the rights reserved to them under the several concessions.

The Charter was granted on October 29, 1889, it being the opinion of the Imperial Government that the Company would ‘relieve them from diplomatic difficulties and heavy expenditure, and, in particular, render valuable assistance to them by undertaking the administration of the Bechuanaland Protectorate.’

Mr. Rhodes became managing director in South Africa, and the other directors were the Dukes of Abercorn and Fife, Lord Gifford, Mr. Albert (now Lord) Grey, Sir Horace Farquhar, Messrs. Maguire, Causton, and Beit. The capital of the Company was at first 1,000,000*l.* sterling, afterwards

increased to 2,000,000*l.* In June 1890 the Company took the practical step of despatching an expedition from the northern boundary of Bechuanaland to Fort Salisbury in Mashonaland. This was done under the direction of the High Commissioner with the authority of the home Government. It consisted of 200 European pioneers and 500 police, organised by Mr. Frank Johnson, accompanied by Mr. Selous, and commanded by Colonel Pennefather. The march was 400 miles in length, along which the 'Selous road' was constructed by the pioneer force. Paths were cut through forests, rivers rendered fordable, streams spanned with bridges, and forts established and garrisoned at Tuli, Victoria, Charter, and Salisbury.

It was obvious to well-informed persons that between an arrogant conquering native race such as the Matabele and civilised law-abiding white men a conflict sooner or later was inevitable. It came at the end of 1893, when the Matabele power was overthrown, and their country occupied by Dr. Jameson's forces. Severe attacks have been made, and are still made, upon the Chartered Company in reference to this war, the charge being that it was deliberately provoked by the Company, and that the destruction of the Matabele was the outcome of a carefully planned policy. Now, the war was made by the express permission of the Imperial Government, and an official inquiry was instituted on the part of that Government after the war, which exonerated the Company from the charges made against them in regard to both the origin and the conduct of the war.

As early as the end of 1890 the Company had already been considerably hampered by a quarrel which arose between them and the Portuguese about the right of the Company to establish communications between their eastern frontier in Manica and the coast at Beira in Portuguese territory. But the firmness and tact of Sir Henry Loch, who was then High Commissioner, prevented things coming to extremes, and in 1891, by the Anglo-Portuguese Convention, the territorial claims of Portugal were recognised, while the construction of a railway from Beira to Charterland was sanctioned by Portugal, with an agreement not to levy duties of more than 3 per cent. on goods landed at Beira to be carried to Rhodesia. The free navigation of the Zambesi was also secured.*

* A concise and most interesting account of the Chartered Company's career and prospects is given by Mr. Worsfold in the 12th chapter of his 'South Africa.'

In spite of all the troubles which have beset the Company, a 'trek' from the Transvaal, a conflict with the Portuguese, and the Matabele war, the developement of their possessions south of the Zambesi has been marvellously rapid. A railway from Beira, on the East coast, has been already pushed almost to Untali, the most eastern township within the Company's borders; and it will be carried on without delay to Salisbury, thus connecting the capital of Rhodesia with the coast. Overland from the Cape Colony the railway communication has been rapidly advancing. In October 1894 a line was opened for traffic from Vryburg to Mafeking in Bechuanaland, and it is contemplated that a further section of about a hundred miles on the way to Charterland will be opened next July. It will then be carried to Palapye, and thence to Buluwayo and Salisbury, there meeting the East-coast line from Beira. Altogether the Company have constructed nearly three hundred miles of railway.

Telegraph lines have been made from Macloutsie, on the southern border of Rhodesia, to Mangwe, Buluwayo, Charter, and Salisbury, which last-named place is connected by a wire with Beira on the coast. The total length of telegraph line in operation on December 5, 1895, was, according to the Company's latest report, no less than 1,354 miles. In addition to this vigorous construction of railways and telegraphs, the Company have established in their vast territory a well-organised system of civilised government, consisting of a High Court, a Land Commission, various magistracies, and a police force—partly formed out of the conquered Matabele, distributed in detachments over the country. It is within the short space of six years that the Company, in the face of great difficulties both from nature and from man, has effected such changes for good over much of the vast territory—altogether 2,000 miles long by 1,000 miles broad—now under their jurisdiction.

In passing judgement upon Mr. Rhodes and his Company for their participation (whatever it may turn out to have been) in the raid led by Dr. Jameson into the Transvaal, these facts cannot be forgotten. They are facts of eloquent import for the British taxpayer, upon whom, in the absence of the Company, the expense of governing a country as large as all Europe without Russia must have fallen, with the almost certain alternative of its being occupied by a foreign Power. It would not be right, when Dr. Jameson is actually standing in the dock, to discuss whether he is guilty of the crime with which he is charged; and he is

certainly entitled, like any other prisoner, to the full benefit of his previous high character and great services. This much, however, it is permissible to observe. The enthusiasm felt about the raid as a feat of riding or fighting is clearly misplaced. To ride about 130 miles in three days and three nights is nothing wonderful, and for 500 men to surrender after losing 15 killed and about 50 wounded is not heroic. When a detachment of 240 men of the 94th Regiment were stopped by Boers at Bronker's Spruit in 1880, they did not surrender until they had lost 57 killed and 100 wounded; and at Majuba Hill, out of upwards of 500 British troops engaged, 92 were killed, including the general, and 134 were wounded.*

The rights and the duties of the Imperial Government in reference to the Chartered Company are, as they ought to be, of a direct and imperative character. When, in 1889, a charter was granted to the British South Africa Company, the country which was to be the field of their operations was only within the sphere of British influence, though subsequently the protectorate, which then existed south of the line of 22 deg. South latitude, was extended up to and beyond the Zambesi. Neither the charter nor the concession obtained from Lobengula gave the Company express territorial jurisdiction. The latter was merely a concession to work minerals. Concessions of the same character were subsequently obtained by the Company from Khama, chief of the Bamangwato; from Gungunhana, chief of Gazaland; from Sekgome, chief of the Lake N'Gami region. It has been said that since the war the Company have acquired rights over Matabeleland by virtue of conquest; but of course any such title must, in legal language, enure for the benefit of the Imperial Government, from whom the Company derives its existence, under whose ultimate authority its forces acted, and by whose troops it was, in fact, assisted. It is true that by the agreement come to in May 1894 between the Government and the Company, and by the order in Council of July 1894, the latter have been invested with the administration of the whole region (excluding the Bechuanaland Protectorate) lying between the Portuguese possessions, the South African Republic, British Bechuanaland, the German Protectorate, and the rivers Chobe and Zambesi, but the ultimate jurisdiction is carefully reserved to the Imperial Government.

* Nixon's 'Complete Story of the Transvaal,' pp. 215, 251.

The Company governs through an administrator and a council of four members. Yet none of these officials can be appointed without the approval of the Secretary of State, and any of them may be removed by him. No laws can be made by the Company until sanctioned by the High Commissioner; nor can any such law affect the force either of any order in Council or of any proclamation issued by the High Commissioner, except with the consent of the latter. The judge and the magistrates are appointed subject to the High Commissioner's approval, and may be suspended by him. An appeal lies from the High Court to the Cape Supreme Court, and from thence to the Privy Council. The Company's military and police force, which consists of some mounted European police, about two hundred native police, and the Rhodesia Volunteer Horse, is raised under Article 10 of the Charter, which is as follows:—

'The Company shall, to the best of its ability, preserve peace and order in such ways and manners as it shall consider necessary, and may, with that object, make ordinances (to be approved by our Secretary of State), and may establish and maintain a force of police.'

It is not easy from the last report to arrive at the effective normal strength of the Company's forces, but in the autumn of last year their numbers were increased by the enlistment of upwards of a hundred of the disbanded Imperial British Bechuanaland Police at Mafeking. The force which raided the Transvaal under Dr. Jameson was made up partly of the Company's police brought down to Mafeking on the plea of protecting the northward construction of the railway, and partly of recruits from the disbanded police of Bechuanaland, and amounted in all to 510 men. Since the raid the whole of the Company's forces have been placed under the command of Imperial officers, and certain portions of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, which had been last year made over to the Company, have been withdrawn from its jurisdiction. Dr. Jameson has been removed from the administratorship, to which the Company, with the approval of the Government, has appointed Lord Grey. Colonel Sir Richard Martin has been nominated not only Commandant-General of all the Company's forces, but Deputy Commissioner for the whole of its territories, being responsible only to the High Commissioner. Mr. Rhodes has gone back to Rhodesia simply as a private individual, though he is still the Company's managing director in South Africa. It will be seen that, short of withdrawing the

Charter, the Imperial Government has punished the Company with severity, though no one can say with excessive severity.

Mr. Rhodes and the Company are not, like Dr. Jameson and the Johannesburg leaders, on their trial, though they will have to submit to the investigation which the Government has very properly undertaken to make into their recent conduct. It is therefore permissible to say something about them in connexion with the raid into the Transvaal. With regard to the Company, they must face the same alternative that presented itself in the case of President Kruger and the raids made ten years ago from the Transvaal into Bechuanaland and Zululand. Either the Company was a party to the raid, in which case the immediate withdrawal of the Charter would be the mildest step which the Imperial Government could take; or the Company is not strong enough to control its own officials. The latter view, which is clearly the one taken by the Government, fully justifies the Government in substituting their own effective authority over the police for the weak and incompetent control of the Company. It is a step due to the general interests of South Africa, due to Dutch feeling, which has been rudely shocked, and due, above all, to the reputation and good name of Great Britain. Moreover, though the difficulty of settling the Transvaal may be great, it is at least possible that Mr. Chamberlain may have to face a graver difficulty in Rhodesia. The future of that vast country is not yet assured. The corner-stone upon which the great fabric of the Chartered Company has been built is, after all, the chance that there are paying mines in Rhodesia. That chance still hangs in the balance. Every year that passes without the discovery in paying quantities of the supposed mineral wealth heightens the risk and deepens the suspicion that, in fact, the country is not rich in gold, and that the capital which has been poured out in the belief that it is will never see any return. What will be the situation when that discovery comes to be made? What will be the effect upon British influence in South Africa? The Imperial Government may find a huge area of central South Africa thrown upon their hands, and have to face such a reaction, such a feeling of general disgust throughout the country with everything to do with South Africa, as will make it exceedingly difficult to maintain a hold on any portion of it outside the colonial borders. Ultimately Rhodesia may prosper as an agricultural country. But

that cannot be for some long time, and the contingency just suggested must not be lost sight of.

The remedy, or rather the only possible safe course to be followed by the Imperial Government with a view to such an eventuality, is to act, as Mr. Chamberlain is acting, in harmony with the preponderance of colonial feeling in South Africa. His statement in the House of Commons on February 13 left nothing to be desired. He said :—

‘We are constantly reminded of the fact that our Dutch fellow-citizens are the majority in South Africa, and I think I may say for myself as for my predecessor, we are prepared to go as far as Dutch sentiment will support us. That is the keynote of the policy, not of this Government alone, but of all Governments in South Africa. It is a very serious thing, a matter involving most serious considerations, if we are asked to go in opposition to Dutch sentiment.’

In the same memorable speech Mr. Chamberlain draws a striking picture of the Mr. Rhodes of yesterday—the first Minister of the Cape Colony, the master of Rhodesia, the idol of a large part of South Africa—and the Mr. Rhodes of to-day—

‘a private individual having not the control of a single policeman, having ceased to be Prime Minister, and, for the moment at all events, having seen his work jeopardised, possibly destroyed—the work he set himself of consolidating and bringing together the Dutch and English races.’

To be shorn of his authority must be mortifying; but probably Mr. Chamberlain has gauged Mr. Rhodes rightly in supposing that he will feel more keenly the failure of his work of unification, and especially the charges of treachery freely brought against him by his Dutch friends in South Africa. He has expressly declared that Dr. Jameson carried out the raid without his authority. Yet can he not escape from the damning facts set out with stern brevity in a letter written by Mr. Hofmeyr, an old friend of his, and perhaps the most weighty exponent of Dutch feeling at the Cape. He writes thus to his correspondent :—

‘You wish to know whether I have broken with Mr. Rhodes. I answer: Yes; I am no longer on my former footing of intimacy with him. You wish to know, further, the causes which have brought about this change. I answer: They are founded on the firm conviction, resulting from a careful weighing of all the evidence in my possession, that Mr. Rhodes did not, in the matter of the Jameson inroad, conduct himself in such a manner as one had reason to expect from the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony—a Prime Minister, more-

over, who enjoyed the full confidence of the great majority of colonial Afrianders. He must have known a considerable time before the inroad—nay, he did know—that a strong and well-equipped column of the Chartered Company's force was concentrated on the Transvaal frontier, partly within our boundaries, with the object of marching into the Republic at a suitable moment; but he took no proper steps, either as managing director of the Chartered Company or as Premier of the Cape Colony, to defeat the proposed object. He, several days before the inroad, received telegraphic warnings on the subject from more than one direction, among them one from a member of our Cape Legislative Council who happened to be at Johannesburg; but he ignored them one and all. When he received absolute information that Dr. Jameson had actually moved into the Transvaal at the head of the Chartered Company's forces, he left his own colleagues for nearly a day and a half in complete ignorance of the fact. He even kept away from his office, so that it was difficult for them to see him. He sent no warning to the Government of the threatened, though friendly, Republic. He published no official repudiation and suspension of Dr. Jameson as Administrator of Rhodesia, and though I do believe he had given no explicit orders to the Doctor to march at the very hour and day on which he started, he made no effort to induce his Excellency the High Commissioner to immediately issue a proclamation against Jameson. He did, when it was too late, send the Doctor a message to return, which does not appear to have reached him at all during his march; but when his Excellency caused a proclamation to be drawn up, in spite of Mr. Rhodes's non-activity, he did nothing to impart force to it or to facilitate its publication. On the only occasion since the inroad on which he addressed a colonial public, he carefully abstained from all censure of the plot which had culminated in the bloodshed near Krugersdorp, but boasted, on the other hand, that his political career was only now going to commence in earnest.'

There are yet other features in Mr. Rhodes's conduct hardly touched upon by Mr. Hofmeyr: his complete disloyalty to the High Commissioner in keeping him in the dark as to what was going on, and his failure to consider what terribly grave dangers might be brought upon the whole British Empire. Dr. Jameson's raid brought us to the brink of a war with Germany. We may yet have to face a struggle with the Boers for British supremacy. We have been actually plunged into conflict with the natives in Matabeleland. Nor can it be said that Mr. Rhodes's rapid retirement to Rhodesia, however natural, is calculated to make the task of his friends and supporters an easier one. It may be a laudable thing to look after the material interests of the Chartered Company, and by the establishment of a strong British province in Rhodesia to repair the deep injury done to British influence in South Africa; but there

is something which, to him, should be more important than either of these considerations—his reputation for good faith. He must be aware that he is widely charged, not merely with the treachery expressed in Mr. Hofmeyr's letter, but, which is even worse, with being a party to a plot hatched for financial reasons, and mainly in the interests of capitalists, to upset a friendly Government and obtain the control of a rich territory. In some form or other those charges will yet have to be met. At the annual Congress of the Africander Bond, a week or two ago, a strong resolution was unanimously carried, which, after recapitulating the charges made in Mr. Hofmeyr's letter, concludes:—

'The Congress maintains that, unless Mr. Rhodes purge himself of all knowledge of these charges and of favouring the conspiracy and protecting the leaders, it is impossible for the National Africander party to work with him on political grounds.'

Can any one wonder at that? The Dutch have, as a rule, been accustomed to open straightforward dealing from Englishmen. When Sir Henry Loch left South Africa last year, after having, during his term of office, had to deal with most delicate questions affecting the Transvaal, and having had more than once to bring home to President Kruger unpalatable truths, the organ of the Boer Government bade him farewell in these words:—

'His Excellency has gained more information in regard to Transvaal politics than any previous representative of Her Majesty, and although we can scarcely expect him on all occasions to think as we think, still we have a firm belief that, from a keen sense of justice and fair play, when other questions concerning this Republic come to be debated in England, Sir Henry Loch will be able, as a true-born English gentleman, to place matters before the British public in a fair and unbiassed light.'

That is exactly the impression which a high-minded English official leaves behind him.

The ruling passion of Mr. Rhodes is believed to be pride in the greatness of his country. He has himself said, in a speech which he made at Cape Town in 1892, *'If I have one good feeling or sentiment, it is the love which I have for the flag that I have been born under, and under which I continue.'*

Much will be forgiven to Mr. Rhodes by his countrymen in his zeal for such a cause, and they will repel with indignation, as long as Mr. Rhodes allows them to do so, the suggestion that he has permitted a noble, if ill-regulated, ambition to degenerate into sordid financial greed. But a refusal to

plead is not a mark of innocence, and persistent silence under grave charges suggests conclusions unfavourable to the accused. South Africa has constantly been a theatre for the display of the 'various and uncertain fortunes' of distinguished men, and it has never been safe to pass a verdict upon seemingly brilliant careers in that part of the world until their close. The acquisition and civilisation of a province like Rhodesia is a great achievement; but if it can only be done by destroying the confidence between Dutch and English in South Africa, the price is heavy, and the verdict of history must be doubtful. Posterity sees the whole of a play out. It watches how the actors leave the stage, and it is only when the parts played by each of them close honourably, or, as Cicero said, 'si vero exitu notabili' 'concluduntur,' that it stamps them with the seal of its priceless approval.

- ART. II.—1. *The Letters of Charles Lamb*. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by ALFRED AINGER. London: 1888.
2. *Letters of John Keats to his Family and Friends*. Edited by SIDNEY COLVIN. London: 1891.
3. *Letters and Verses of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley*. Edited by ROWLAND E. PROTHERO. London: 1895.
4. *Letters of Matthew Arnold, 1848–88*. Collected and arranged by GEORGE RUSSELL. London and New York: 1895.
5. *Letters of Edward Fitzgerald to Fanny Kemble*. Edited by WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT. London: 1895.
6. *Vailima Letters, from Robert Louis Stevenson to Sidney Colvin, 1890–94*. London: 1895.

THE preservation and posthumous publication of private correspondence has supplied modern society with one of its daintiest literary luxuries. The art of letter-writing is, of course, no recent invention; it reached a high level of excellence, like almost every other branch of refined expression in prose or verse, in the older world of Rome. Nevertheless, the exceeding rarity of the specimens that have come down to us from those times is an important element of their value; while in our own day the letters of eminent persons fill many bookshelves in every decent library, and their quantity increases out of all proportion to their quality.

It may be said, generally, of fine letter-writing that it is a distinctive product of a high civilisation, denoting the existence of a cultured and leisured class, implying the conditions of secure intercourse, confidence, sociability, many common interests, and that peculiar delight in the stimulating interchange of ideas and feelings which is one characteristic of modern life. The language of a country must have thrown off its archaic stiffness, must have acquired suppleness and variety; the writer's instrument must be a style that combines familiarity with distinction, correctness of thought with easy diction. It is from the lack of these conditions that the Asiatic world has given us no such letters; the material as well as the intellectual environment has been wanting. For similar reasons the middle ages of Europe produced us none of the kind with which we are now dealing; the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries have

left us very few samples of them; and since in this article we propose to treat only of English letter-writers, we may affirm that the art did not flourish in England until the eighteenth century, when according to certain authorities it rose to something like perfection. It is a notable observation of Hume's that Swift is the first Englishman who wrote polite prose; and Swift is one of the earliest, as he is still one of the pleasantest, writers of private correspondence that has taken a permanent place in our literature.

We can understand without difficulty why the eighteenth century was a period favourable to the growth of excellent letter-writing. There were very few newspapers, and those which appeared were neither good nor trustworthy; there were no magazines or reviews up to the middle of the century; yet there was a small and highly cultivated society with an exquisite taste for literature, with a keen interest in public affairs, and a very strong appetite for philosophic discussion. Side by side with the intellectual conditions we may take into account the national circumstances of that age. The post was expensive, with a slow and intermittent circulation, so that letters, being infrequent, were worth writing carefully and at length; while correspondents were nevertheless not separated by distances of time and space sufficient to weaken or extinguish the desire of interchanging thoughts and news. For it is within the experience of most of us that the difficulty of keeping up regular correspondence increases with distance; that friends who meet seldom write to each other rarely; and that, although letters are most valued by those who are far from home and long absent, yet it is precisely in the case of prolonged separation that the chain of friendly communication is apt gradually to slacken until it becomes entirely disconnected. So long, indeed, as men depended for news on private sources, there was always a kind of obligation to write; but the telegraph and the newspaper have now monopolised the Intelligence Department. On the whole, it may be concluded that the art of letter-writing flourishes best within a limited radius of distance, among persons living neither very near to each other nor yet far apart, who meet occasionally yet not often, and who are within the same range of social, political, and intellectual influences. Its best period is probably before the advent of copious indefatigable journalism, before men have taken to publishing letters in the morning papers, and when they have not yet acquired the economical habit of

reserving all their valuable ideas and information for signed articles in some monthly review.

It was under these conditions that the letters of eminent men in the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century were generally written. In the former century letter-writing was undoubtedly a recognised form of high literary workmanship, with close affinities on one side to the diary or private journal, and on another to the essay. Long, continuous, and intimate correspondence, as in the case of Swift and Walpole, gravitated toward the journal; dissertations on literature, politics, and manners were more akin to the essay; while in the hands of the novelist the journalistic series of letters took artificial developement into a method of story-telling. On the other side, the tendency of epistles to become essays reached its climax in the letters of Burke, some of which are only distinguishable from brilliant pamphlets by the formal address and subscription.

With the nineteenth century begins an era of amusing and animated letter-writing. The classic and somewhat elaborate style of the preceding age falls into disuse; the essayist draws gradually back into a department of his own; the new school reflects, as is natural, the general tendency of English literature towards a livelier and more varied movement, with a wider range of subjects and sympathies. In his letters, as in his poetry, the precursor of the Naturalistic school was Cowper, who could be simple without being trivial, was never prosy and often pathetic, and who possessed the rare art of stamping on his reader's mind an enduring impression of quiet and somewhat commonplace society in the English midlands. That poets should usually have been good letter-writers is probably no more than might have been expected, for imagination and word-power must tell everywhere; yet the list is so long as to be worth noticing. Swift, Pope, and Cowper in the last century, and in the present century Scott, Byron, Shelley, Coleridge, and Southey, have all left us distinctive and copious correspondence. Wordsworth may, perhaps, be classed as a notable exception; for Wordsworth's letters are dull, being at their best more like essays or literary dissertations than the free outpouring of intimate thought. They have none of the charm which comes from the revelation of private doubt or passionate affection that is ordinarily stifled by convention; they are, on the contrary, eminently respectable, deliberate, and carefully expressed. 'It has ever been the habit of my mind,' he writes, 'to trust that expediency will come out of fidelity

‘to principles, rather than to seek my principles of action in ‘calculations of expediency.’ This is what the Americans call ‘high toned’; but the metal is too heavy for the light calibre of a letter.

Whether Tennyson had the gift of letter-writing we shall be able to judge when his biography appears, though we may anticipate that it will contain some things worthy of a great master in the art of language. The publication of letters deriving their sole or principal interest from the general reputation of the writer is indeed quite legitimate and intelligible. They are often biographical documents of considerable value, apart from all questions of style and intellectual quality; they can be handled and arranged to exhibit a man’s character; they may be used as negative proofs of reserve and reticence, as showing his mental attitude towards various subjects, his domestic habits and virtues, or merely as annals of where he went and what he did. They may be carefully selected and revised for occasional insertion at different stages of a long biography, where the editor sees fit to let the dead man speak for himself; they may be employed as an advocate chooses the papers in his brief, for attack or defence. Or they may be produced without commentary, sifting, or omissions, as the unvarnished presentation of a man’s private life and particular features which a candid friend commits to the judgement of posterity. Or, lastly, they may be mere relics, not much more in some instances than curiosities, valued for much the same reasons that would set a high price on the autograph or the inkstand of a celebrated man, on his furniture, his house, or anything that was his. In proportion as little or nothing is known of such a man’s private life, every scrap of his writing increases in value; and so a letter of Shakespeare or of Dante would be priceless. But of Shakespeare no letter has come down to us, and of Dante not even, we believe, his signature; though we do know something of what Dante did and thought, for his religion and his politics are manifested in his poems; whereas Shakespeare’s works have the divine attribute of impersonality. Here is one supreme poet of whom the world would gladly hear anything; but nothing remains to feed the modern appetite, which is never so well gratified as when a rare and sublime genius stands revealed as the writer of ordinary letters upon petty domesticities.

It is evidently impossible to draw a line that shall accurately divide the interest that men feel in a celebrated person from the interest that they take in his posthumous

correspondence, so as to determine how far the letters are good in themselves. When the writer is well known, he and his writings are inseparable. Yet some attempt must be made, for the purposes of this article, to distinguish critically between letters that are readable and will survive by their own literary quality, as fine specimens of the art, and those which are preserved and published on the score of the writer's name and fame, with little aid from their merits. In which category are we to place the letters of Keats, including those that have been very recently unearthed by diligent literary excavation? His poetry is so exquisite, so radiant with imaginative colour, that to see such a man in the light of common day, among the ordinary cares and circumstances of the lower world, is necessarily a descent and a disillusion. He was young, he was poor, he had few acquaintances worthy of him; he roved about England and Scotland without adventures; his letters were perfectly familiar and unsophisticated. As Mr. Sidney Colvin has written, in an excellent preface to an edition of 1891, 'he poured out to those he loved his whole self indiscriminately, generosity and fretfulness, ardour and despondency, boyish petulance side by side with manful good sense, the tattle of suburban parlours with the speculations of a spirit unsurpassed for native gift and insight.' Every now and then the level of his easy-going discourse is lit up by a flash of wit, and occasionally by a jet of brilliant fancies among which some of his finest poetry may be traced in the process of incubation. His whole mind is set upon his art; for that only, and for a few intimate friends, does he care to live and work; his letters often tell us when and where, under what influences, his best pieces were composed; one likes to know, for example, that the 'Ode to Autumn' came to him on a fine September day during a Sunday's walk over the stubbles near Winchester. His criticisms are always good, and their form picturesque. He compares human life to a chamber that becomes gradually darkened, in which one door after another is set open, showing only dim passages leading out into darkness. This, he says, is the burden of the mystery which Wordsworth felt and endeavoured to explore; and he thinks that Wordsworth is deeper than Milton, though he attributes this, justly, more to 'the general and gregarious advance of intellect, than individual greatness of mind.' So far as spontaneity and the free unguarded play of sportive and serious ideas, taken as they came uppermost, are tests and conditions of excellence in this kind of writing, Keats's

letters must rank high. Nevertheless there is still room for doubt whether these juvenile productions would have left any but a most ephemeral mark apart from their connexion with his poetry.

In the case of other poets, who were his contemporaries, the verdict will be different. They are all to be classed, though not in the same line, as writers of letters that have great original and intrinsic value. Scott's letters exhibit his generous and masculine nature, the buoyancy of his spirits in good or bad fortune, and that romantic attachment to old things and ideas which hardened latterly into inveterate Toryism. Southey's prose writings will probably survive his metrical compositions, which indeed have already fallen into oblivion. There is life in a poet so long as he is quoted, but no verses or even lines of Southey have fixed themselves in the popular memory. And whereas the letters of Keats disclose a mind filled with the sense of beauty and rich with poetic seedlings that blossomed into beautiful flowers, in Southey's correspondence we discern only an erudite man of taste labouring diligently upon epics which he expected to be immortal. The letters of Byron stand upon broader ground, because Byron was so much more of a personage than either Keats, or Southey, or Wordsworth. They supply, in the first place, an invaluable, and indeed indispensable, interpretation of his poetry, which is to a great extent the imaginative and romantic presentation of his own feelings, fortunes, and peculiar experiences. Secondly, they are full of good sayings and caustic criticism; they touch upon the domain of politics and society as well as upon literature; they give the opinions passed upon contemporary events and persons, during a stirring period of European history, by a man of genius who was also a man of the world; they float on the current of a strangely troubled existence. In these letters we have an important contribution to our acquaintance with literary circles and London society, and with several notable figures on either stage, during the years immediately before and after Waterloo. They were published in an introduction to the works of a famous poet; yet, although they cannot be detached from his poetry, they possess great independent merits of their own. They echo the sounds of revelry by night; they strike a note of careless vivacity, the tone of a man who is at home alike in good and bad company, whose judgement on books and politics, on writers and speakers, is always fresh, bold, and original. We may lament that the spirit of reckless devilry and dissipation should have entered

into Byron; and the lessons to be drawn from the scenes and adventures in Venice and elsewhere, described for the benefit of Tom Moore, are very different from the moral examples furnished by the tranquil and well-ordered correspondence of our own day. Yet the world would have been poorer for the loss of this memorial of an Unquiet Life, and the historical gallery of literature would have missed the full-length portrait of an extraordinary man.

The letters of Coleridge, like their writer, belong to another class, yet, like Byron's, they have the clear-cut stamp of individuality. Here again we have the man himself, with his intensity of feeling, his erratic moods and singular phraseology, the softness of his heart and the weakness of his will. He belongs to the rapidly diminishing class of notable men who have freely poured their real sentiments and thoughts out of their brain into their letters, who have given their best (without keeping their worst) to their correspondents, so that the letters abound with pathetic and amusing confessions, and with ideas that bear the stamp of the author's singular idiosyncrasy. The 'Memorials of Coleorton' are a collection of letters written to the Beaumont family by Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, and Scott; the reader may pass from one to another by taking them as they come; the book is like the *menu* of a dinner with varied courses. Wordsworth's letters are the product of cultivated taste, a fine eye for rural scenery, and lofty moral sentiment. Southey is the high-class *littérateur*, with a strong dash of Toryism in Church and State; in both there is a total absence of eccentricity, but in neither case is the attention forcibly arrested or any striking passage retained. When Coleridge is served up the flavour of unique expression and a sort of divine simplicity is unmistakable; he is alternately indignant and remorseful; he soars to themes transcendent, and sinks anon to the humble details of his errors and embarrassments. Uncongenial society plunged him into such dark depression that he is not ashamed to confess that he found 'bodily relief in weeping.'

'On Tuesday evening Mr. R——, the author of ——, drank tea and spent the evening with us at Grasmere; and this had produced a very unpleasant effect upon my spirits. . . . If to be a poet or man of genius entailed on us the necessity of housing such company in our bosoms, I would pray the very flesh off my knees to have a head as dark and unfurnished as Wordsworth's old Molly's. . . . If I believed it possible that the man liked me, upon my soul I should feel exactly as if I were tarred and feathered.'

And so on through the whole letter, with a comical energy of phrase that scorns reserve or compass in giving vent to the misery caused by uninteresting conversation. We may contrast this melancholy tea-drinking with Byron's rollicking account of a dinner with some friends 'of note and 'notoriety.'

'Like other parties of the same kind, it was first silent, then talking, then argumentative, then disputatious, then unintelligible, then altogethery, then articulate, and then drunk. When we had reached the last step of this glorious ladder it was difficult to get down again without stumbling; and, to crown all, Kinnaird and I had to conduct Sheridan down a damned corkscrew staircase, which had been certainly constructed before the invention of fermented liquors, and to which no legs, however crooked, could possibly accommodate themselves. Both he and Coleman were, as usual, very good; but I carried away much wine, and the wine carried away my memory, so that all was hiccup and happiness for the last hour or so, and I am not impregnated with any of the conversation.'

We are, of course, not reviewing Byron or Coleridge; we are only giving samples by the way. Here are two great poets, remote from each other as the two poles in social circumstances and habit of mind, but at any rate alike in this one quality—that their life is in their letters, and that in such passages as these the genuine undisguised temperament of each writer stands forth in a relief that could only be brought out by his own unintentional masterstrokes. For neither of them was aware that in these scenes he was describing his own character—though Byron may have intended to display his wit, and Coleridge may have been to some extent conscious of his own humour. In the way of literary criticism, again, Coleridge throws out the quaint and uncommon remark upon Addison's Essays, that they 'have produced a passion for the unconnected in the minds 'of Englishmen.' And he touches delicately upon the negative or barren side of the critical mind in his observation that the critics are the eunuchs that guard the temple of the Muses.

Of Shelley's letters, again, we may say that they are unconsciously autobiographical; they are confessions of character, spontaneous, unguarded, abounding with brilliancies and extravagances. They betray his shortcomings, but they attest his generosity and courage; they are the outpourings of a new spirit, who detests what would now be called Philistinism in literature and society, who does not stop to pick his words, or to mix water with the red wine of his

enthusiasm. He abandons himself in his letters to the feelings of the moment; he ardently pursues his immediate object by sophistical arguments which convict himself but could never convince a correspondent, and which astonish and amuse the calm reader of after days. 'A kind of ineffable sickening disgust seizes my mind when I think of this most despotic, most unrequired fetter which prejudice has forged to confine its energies. . . . Anti-matrimonialism is as necessarily connected with scepticism as if religion and marriage began their course together,' for both are the fruit of odious superstition. He was endeavouring to persuade Harriet Westbrook to join him in testifying by example against the obsolete and ignoble ceremony of the marriage service, which he held to be a degradation that no one could ask 'an amiable and beloved female' to undergo. In Shelley's case, as in Byron's, the letters are of inestimable biographical value as witnesses to character, as reflecting the vicissitudes of a life which was to the writer more like the 'fierce vexation of a dream' than a well-spent leisurely existence, and as the sincere unstudied expression of his emotions. For all these reasons they are essential to a right appreciation of his magnificent poetry.

William Godwin, pedantic, self-conceited, and impecunious, has come down to us as a kind of central figure in a literary group which included such men as Coleridge, Shelley, and Lamb, of whom the somewhat formal English world at the beginning of this century was not worthy. By reason of this position, and because Shelley married his daughter, he became the cause and subject of excellent letter-writing, though his own correspondence is heavy with philosophic platitudes. It is of the class which, as we have said, is akin to essays; he discourses at large upon first principles in religion and politics; and out of his frigid philosophy came some of Shelley's most ardent paradoxes. But some of the most amusing letters in the English language were addressed to him. It was after a supper at Godwin's that Coleridge wrote remorsefully acknowledging 'a certain tipsiness'—not that he felt any 'unpleasant titubancy'—whereby he had been seduced into defending a momentary idea as if it had been an old and firmly established principle; which (we may add) has been the way of other talkers since Coleridge. No one, he goes on to say, could have a greater horror than himself of the principles he thus accidentally propounded, or a deeper conviction of their

irrationality; 'but the whole thinking of my life will not bear me up against the crowd and press of my mind, when 'it is elevated beyond its natural pitch.' The effect of punch, after wine, was to make a philosopher argue hotly against his profoundest beliefs; yet it is to Godwin's supper that we owe this diverting palinodia. And all Englishmen should be grateful to Godwin for having written the tragedy of 'Antonio;' for not only was it most justly damned, but it also elicited some letters to the unlucky author that are unmatched in the record of candid criticism. Mrs. Inchbald writes, briefly:—

'I thank you for the play of Antonio, and I most sincerely wish you joy of having produced a work which will protect you from being classed with the successful dramatists of the present time, but which will hand you down to posterity among the honoured few who, during the past century, have totally failed in writing for the stage.'

Coleridge goes to work more elaborately:—

'In the tragedy I have frequently used certain marks [which he gives]. Of these, the first calls your attention to my suspicions that your language is false or intolerable English. The second marks the passages that struck me as *flat* or mean. The third is a note of reprobation, levelled at those sentences in which you have adopted that worst sort of vulgar language, commonplace book language. The last mark implies bad metre.'

All this is free speaking beyond the compass of modern literary consultations. It may be added that Lamb also discussed the play, before it was performed, in his letters to Godwin; and that his description of Godwin's deportment, of his own feelings, and of the behaviour of the audience on the memorable night that witnessed its utter failure, has bequeathed to us a comedy over which the tragic Muse herself might well become hysterical.

There is, indeed, in the correspondence of this remarkable group a tone of frankness and sincerity which, combined with the absence of malice and a strong element of fun, distinguishes it from the half-veiled disapproval and prudish reserve of later days. 'When you next write so eloquently 'and well against law and lawyers,' says Coleridge to Godwin, 'be so good as to leave a larger place for your 'wafer, as by neglect of this a part of your last was obliterated.' Again, in a more serious tone: 'Ere I had yet read 'or seen your works, I, at Southey's recommendation, 'wrote a sonnet in praise of the author. When I had read 'them, religious bigotry, the but half understanding of your 'principles, and the *not* half understanding of my own, com-

'bined to render me a warm and boisterous anti-Godwinist.' His moods and circumstances, his joys and pains, are reflected in his language with remarkable fertility of metaphor; his feelings vary with his society. Of Lamb he writes that 'his taste acts so as to appear like the mechanic simplicity of an instinct—in brief, he is worth a hundred men of more talents: conversation with the latter tribe is like the use of leaden bells, one warms by exercise, Lamb every now and then *irradiates*.' In the best letters of this remarkable group we perceive the exquisite sensitiveness of open and eager minds, giving free play to their ideas and feelings, their delight and disgust, so that their life and thoughts are mirrored in their correspondence as in their conversation. Such writing has become very rare, if it is not entirely extinct, in these latter days of temperate living and guarded writing. Lamb's own letters are all in a similar key; and that which he wrote to Coleridge, who had a bad habit of borrowing books, is a model of jocose expostulation: 'You never come but you take away some folio that is part of my existence. . . . My third shelf from the top has two devilish gaps, where you have knocked out its two eye teeth.' And his lament over the desolation of London, as it appears to a man who has lived there jovially, and revisits it as a stranger in after years, may even now touch a chord in the hearts of some of us.

'In London I passed houses and places, empty caskets now. The streets, the shops are left, but all old friends are gone. The bodies I cared for are in graves or dispersed. My old clubs that lived so long and flourished so steadily are crumbled away. When I took leave of our friend at Charing Cross, 'twas heavy unfeeling rain, and I had nowhere to go . . . not a sympathising house to turn to in the great city. Never did the waters of heaven pour down on a forlorn head. Yet I tried ten days at a sort of friend's house, large and straggling; one of the individuals of my old long knot of friends, card-players and pleasant companions, that have tumbled to pieces into dust and other things; and I got home convinced that I was better to get to my hole in Enfield and hide like a sick cat in my corner.'

We might, indeed, multiply indefinitely our quotations from the correspondence of this literary period to show its sincerity, its spontaneity, its uncommonness, the tone of intimate brotherhood and natural unruly affection that pervades it everywhere. Nothing of the kind has come down to us from the eighteenth century; and the last fifty years of this century, so prolific in biographies and posthumous publications of the papers of eminent men, go to prove that

in the general transformation of letter-writing these peculiar qualities have almost, though not altogether, disappeared. Probably conversation has suffered a like change; and we may ascribe it generally to a lowering of the social temperature, to the habits of reserve, respectability, and conventional self-restraint that in these days govern so largely the intercourse of men. Something may be due to cautious expurgation of passages which tell against the writer, or might offend modern taste; yet in other respects contemporary editors have been sufficiently indiscreet. And the growth of these habits, so discouraging to free and fearless correspondence, may be partly ascribed to the influence of journalism, which makes every subject stale and sterile by incessantly threshing and tearing at it, and which reviews biographies in a manner that acts as a solemn warning to all men of mark that they take heed what they put into a private letter. There are other causes, to which we may presently advert; but it is quite clear that this fine art is undergoing certain transmutations, and that on the whole it does not flourish quite so vigorously as heretofore.

In a recent article upon Matthew Arnold's letters it is laid down by a consummate critic * that the first canon of unsophisticated letter-writing is that a letter is meant for the eye of a friend, and not for the world. 'Even the lurking thought in anticipation of an audience destroys the charm; the best letters are always improvisations; the public breaks the spell.' In this, as we have already suggested, there is much truth; yet the conditions seem to us too straitly enjoined; for not every man of genius has the gift of striking out his best thoughts, in their best form, clear and true from the hot iron of his mind; and in some of our best writers the improvising spirit is very faint. If a man writes with leisurely care, selecting deliberately the word that exactly matches his thought, aiming directly at the heart of his subject and avoiding prolixity, he may, like Walpole, Gray, and others, produce a delightful letter, provided only that he is sincere and open, has good stuff to give, and does not condescend to varnish his pictures. We want his best thoughts; we should like to have his best form; we do not always care so much for negligent undress. And as for the copious outpouring of his personal feelings, one says many things to a friend or kinsman that are totally without interest to the public unless they are

* Mr. John Morley, 'Nineteenth Century,' December 1895.

expressed in some distinctive manner or embody some originality of handling an ordinary event. This a writer may have the knack of doing artistically, even in a private and confidential letter, without betraying the touch of art; nor, indeed, can we ever know how many of the best modern letters are really improvised. Then, again, with regard to the anticipation of an audience, it is a risk to which every man of note must feel that he is exposed; the shadow of eventual publicity is always in the background; his letters have passed out of his control during his lifetime, and he can only trust in the uncertain discretion of his literary executor. He does not care to leave the record of his passing moods, his confessions of weakness, his personal likings and antipathies, to be discussed by the general reader; and it is probable that he only lets his pen run freely when he feels assured that his confidential improvisations will be judiciously omitted.

It is, we think, impossible to suppose that these considerations have not weighed materially upon the minds of eminent men in our own day, when biographies have become so much more numerous, and when they are so much more closely criticised than formerly. And in comparing the letters written in the early part of this century—such as those from which we have given a few characteristic quotations—with those which have been recently published, we have to take account of these things, among other changes of the social and literary environment. Undoubtedly the comparison is to the advantage of the earlier writings; they seem infinitely more amusing, more genuine, more biographical, more redolent of the manners and complexion of the time. There is in them a flavour of heartiness and irresponsibility which may partly be attributed to the fact that the best writers were poets, whose genius flowered as early as their manhood, and most of whom died young; so that their letters are fresh, audacious, and untempered by the chilly caution of middle or declining age. Their spirits were high, they were ardent in the pursuit of ideals; they were defying society, they either had no family or were at feud with it, and they gave not a thought to the solemn verdict of posterity. For correspondents who were brimming over with humour, imagination, and enthusiasm, no situation could be more thoroughly favourable to sparkling improvisation; and accordingly they have left us letters which will be a joy for ever.

The correspondence of our own generation has been written

under a different intellectual climate, and various circumstances have combined to lower the temperature of its vivacity. Posthumous publicity is now the manifest destiny that overhangs the private life of all notable persons, especially of popular authors, who can observe and inwardly digest continual warnings of the treatment which they are likely to receive from an insatiable and inconsistent criticism. They may have lived long and altered their opinions; they may have quarrelled with friends or rivals, and may have become sworn allies later; they may have publicly praised one whom in private they may have laughed at; for when you have to think what you say, it does not follow that you say what you think. All these considerations, enforced by repeated examples, are apt to damp the natural ardour of improvisation; the more so because the writer may be sure either that his genuine utterances will be suppressed by the editor, or that, if they are produced, the editor will be roundly abused for giving him away. For in these matters the judgement of the general reader is wayward, and his attitude undecided, with a leaning towards hypocrisy. The story of the domestic tribulations and the conjugal bickerings of a great writer, of the irritability that belongs to highly nervous temperaments, and which has always made genius, like the finest animals, hard to domesticate, has lost none of its savour with the public. But if all letters that record such scenes and sayings are faithfully reproduced in preparing the votive tablet upon which the dead man's life is to be delineated, the ungrateful reader answers with an accusation of imprudence, indiscretion, and betrayal of confidence; and the surviving friends protest still more vehemently. Within the last three months these consequences have been forcibly illustrated by the reception of *Cardinal Manning's Life*, in which the letters are of extraordinary value towards the formation of a right understanding of that remarkable personage. Much of all this sensitiveness is clearly due to the hasty fashion of publishing private correspondence within a few years of the writer's decease, but more to the fitful and somewhat feminine temper of an inquisitive yet censorious society.

If, on the other hand, expurgation is freely employed, the result is a kind of emasculation. Nothing is left that can offend or annoy living people, or that might damage the writer's own reputation with an audience that enjoys, yet condemns, unmeasured confidences. And so we get clever, sensible letters of men who have travelled, worked, and

mixed much in society, who have already put into essays or reviews all that they wanted the public to know, and whose private doubts, or follies, or frolics, have been neatly removed from their correspondence. Let us take, for example, two batches of letters very lately published, and written by two men who have left their mark upon their generation. Of Dean Stanley it may be affirmed that no ecclesiastic of his time was better known, or had a higher reputation for strength of character and undaunted Liberalism. His public life and his place in the Anglican Church had been already described in a meritorious biography; and it might have been expected that these letters would bring the reader closer to the man himself, would accentuate the points of a striking individuality. There are few of these letters, we think, by which such expectations have been fulfilled to any appreciable degree. In one or two of them Stanley writes with his genuine sincerity and earnestness on the state of his mind in regard to the new spirit of ecclesiasticism that had arisen in Oxford nearly sixty years ago; we see that he saw and felt the magnitude of a coming crisis, and we can observe the formation of the opinions which he consistently and valiantly upheld throughout his career. The whole instinct of his intellectual nature—and he never lost his trust in reason—was against the high Roman or sacerdotal absolutism in matters of dogma; he ranked Morals far above Faith; and he had that dislike of authoritative uniformity in church government which is in Englishmen a reflection of their political habits. Yet he discerned plainly enough the spring of a movement that was bringing about a Roman Catholic revival.

‘Not that I am turned or turning Newmanist, but that I do feel that the crisis in my opinions is coming on, and that the difficulties I find in my present views are greater than I thought them to be, and that here I am in the presence of a magnificent and consistent system shooting up on every side, whilst all that I see against it is weak and grovelling.’ (Letter to C. J. Vaughan, 1838.)

‘I expect,’ he writes a year later, ‘that the whole thing ‘will have the effect of making me either a great Newmanite ‘or a great Radical;’ and it did end in making him an advanced Liberal. His practical genius and his free converse with general society (from which Manning deliberately turned away as fatal to ecclesiasticism) very soon parted him from the theologians.

‘I think it is true,’ he writes to Jowett (1849), ‘that we have not the same mental interest in talking over subjects of theology that we

had formerly. They have lost their novelty, I suppose ; we know better where we are, having rolled to the bottom together, and being now able only to make a few uphill steps. I acknowledge fully my own want of freshness ; my mind seems at times quite dried up. . . . And at times I have felt an unsatisfied desire after a better and higher sort of life, which makes me impatient of the details of theology.'

In these, and perhaps one or two other passages, we can trace the developement of character and convictions in the man to whom Jowett wrote, thirty years afterwards, that he was 'the most distinguished clergyman in the Church of England, who could do more than any one towards the 'great work of placing religion on a rational basis.'*

But, on the whole, the quality of these letters is by no means equal to their quantity ; and too many of them belong to a class which, though it may have some ephemeral interest among friends and kinsfolk, can retain, we submit, no permanent value at all. It is best described under a title common in French literature—*impressions de voyage*. A very large part of the volume consists of letters written by Stanley, an intelligent and indefatigable tourist, from the countries and cities which he visited, from Petersburg and Palestine, from Paris and Athens, from Spain and Scotland. The standpoint from which he surveys the Holy Land is rather historical and archæological than devotional ; but he had everywhere a clear eye for the picturesque in manners and scenery. He had excellent opportunities of seeing the places and the people ; his descriptive powers are considerable ; and there is a finely drawn picture of All Souls' Day in the Sistine Chapel, written from Rome to Hugh Pearson, although a ludicrous incident comes in at the end like a false note. Such correspondence might be so arranged separately as to make an interesting narrative of travel, but when judged by a high literary or intellectual criterion of letter-writing it is out of court. It is not too much to aver that most, if not all, of these letters might have been written by any refined and cultivated Englishman, whose education and social training had given him correct tastes and a many-sided interest in the world. They belong to the type of private diary or chronicle, and as such they inevitably include trivialities, though not many. Some of Stanley's letters are from Scotland, where he travels about admiring its wildness, and with a cultured interest in its antiquities. But no country has been better ransacked in search of

* Dean Stanley's Letters, p. 440.

the picturesque; it is the original hunting-ground of the romantic tourist, and what Stanley said about it to his family is pleasantly but not powerfully written. It is more than doubtful whether excellence in letter-writing lies that way, or, indeed, whether mediocrity is avoidable. Charles Lamb's letters are none the worse because he stayed in London and had no time for the beauties of Nature.

'For my part,' he wrote, 'with reference to my friends northwards, I must confess that I am not romance-bit about Nature. The earth and sea and sky (when all is said) is but a house to dwell in. If the inmates be courteous, and good liquors flow like the conduits at an old coronation, if they can talk sensibly and feel properly, I have no need to stand staring at the gilded looking-glass, nor at the five-shilling print over the mantelpiece. Just as important to me (in a sense) is all the furniture of my world; eye pampering, but satisfies no heart.'

This may be Cockney taste, yet it is better reading than Stanley's account of Edinburgh or the valley of Glencoe.

The editor assures us, in his preface, that none of these letters touch upon theological controversies, yet many readers might have been very willing to part with some of the travelling journal for closer knowledge of Stanley's inward feelings while he was bearing up the fight of liberty and toleration against the gathering forces that have since scattered and wellnigh overwhelmed the once flourishing Broad Church party. Well might Jowett write to him in 1880, 'You and I, and our dear friend Hugh Pearson, and William Rogers, and some others, are rather isolated in the world, and we must hold together as long as we can.' All those who are here named have passed away, leaving no party leaders of equal rank and calibre; and if Stanley's letters survive at all, they will live upon those passages which remind us how strenuously he contended for the intellectual freedom that he believed to be the true spiritual heritage of English churchmen.

The latest contribution to the department of national literature that we have been surveying is the volume containing the letters of Matthew Arnold (1848-88). 'Here and there,' writes their editor, 'I have been constrained, by deference to living susceptibilities, to make some slight excisions; but with regard to the bulk of the letters this process had been performed before the manuscript came into my hands.' No one has any business to question the exercise of a discretion which must have been necessary in publishing private correspondence so recently written, and only those who saw the originals can decide whether they

have been weakened or strengthened by the pruning. On the other hand, the first canon of unsophistical letter-writing, as laid down by the eminent critic already cited—that letters should be written for the eye of a friend, never for the public—is amply fulfilled. ‘It will be seen’ (we quote again from the preface) ‘that the letters are essentially familiar ‘and domestic, and were evidently written without a thought ‘that they would ever be read beyond the circle of his ‘family.’ They are, in short, mostly family letters that have been necessarily subjected to censorship, and it would be unreasonable to measure a collection of this kind by the high standard that qualifies for admission to the grade of permanent literature. As these letters are to supply the lack of a biography (which was expressly prohibited by his own wish), we are not to look for further glimpses of a character which his editor rightly terms ‘unique and fascinating.’ The general reader may therefore feel some disappointment at finding that the correspondence takes no wider or more varied range; for Matthew Arnold’s circle of acquaintances must have been very large, and he must have been in touch with the leading men in the political, academical, and official society of his day.

The letters are as good as they could be expected to be under these conditions, which are to our mind heavily disadvantageous. We must set aside those which fall under the class of *impressions de voyage*, for the reasons already stated in discussing Stanley’s travelling correspondence. One would not gather from this collection that Arnold was a considerable poet. And the peculiar method of expression, the vein of light irony, the flexibility of style, that distinguish his prose works are here curiously absent; he does not write his letters, as Carlyle did, in the same character as his books. Yet the turn of thought, the prevailing note, can be often detected; as, for instance, in a certain impatience with English defects, coupled with a strong desire to take the conceit out of his fellow-countrymen.

‘The want of independence of mind, the shutting their eyes and professing to believe what they do not, the running blindly together in herds for fear of some obscure danger and horror if they go alone, is so eminently a vice of the English, I think, of the last hundred years, has led them and is leading them into such scrapes and bewilderment, that,’ &c. &c.

It is certainly hard to recognise in this picture the features of the rough roving Englishman who in the course of the last hundred years has conquered India, founded

great colonies, and fought the longest and most obstinate war of modern times: who has been the type of insularity and an incurable antinomian in religion and politics. Not many pages afterwards, however, we find Arnold sharing with the herd of his countrymen the shallow 'conviction as 'to the French always beating any number of Germans who 'come into the field against them.' He adds that 'they 'will never be beaten by any other nation but the English, 'for to every other nation they are in efficiency and intelligence decidedly superior'—an opinion which contradicts his previous judgement of them, and replaces the national superiority on a lofty though insecure basis; for if he was wrong about the French, he may be wrong about us whom he puts above them. Arnold admired the French as much as Carlyle liked the Germans, and both of them enjoyed ridiculing or rating the English; but each was unconsciously swayed by his own particular tastes and temperament, and neither of them had the gift of political prophecy, which is, indeed, very seldom vouchsafed to the highly imaginative mind. He had a strong belief, rare among Englishmen, in administrative organisation. 'Depend upon it,' he writes, 'that the great States of the Continent have two great 'elements of cohesion, in their administrative system and in 'their army, which we have not.' The general conclusion which Arnold seems to have drawn from his travels in Europe and America is that England was far behind France in lucidity of ideas, and inferior to the United States in straightforward political energy and the faculties of national success. 'Heaven forbid that the English nation should 'become like this (the French) nation; but Heaven forbid 'that it should remain as it is. If it does, it will be beaten 'by America on its own line, and by the Continental nations 'on the European line. I see this as plain as I see the 'paper before me.' Since this was written in 1865, England has been perversely holding her own course, nor has she yet fulfilled Arnold's melancholy foreboding, by which he was 'at times overwhelmed with depression,' that England was sinking into a sort of greater Holland, 'for 'want of perceiving how the world is going and must go, 'and preparing herself accordingly.'

On the other hand, his imaginative faculty comes out in his speculation upon the probable changes in the development of the American people that might follow their separation into different groups, if the civil war between

the Northern and Southern States (which had just begun) should break up the Union.

'Climate and mixture of race will then be able fully to tell, and I cannot help thinking that the more diversity of nation there is on the American continent, the more chance there is of one nation developing itself with grandeur and richness. It has been so in Europe. What should we all be if we had not one another to check us and to be learned from? Imagine an English Europe. How frightfully *borné* and dull! Or a French Europe either, for that matter.'

The suggestion is perhaps more fanciful than profound, for history does not repeat itself; and, in fact, the result of breaking up South America into a dozen political groups has not yet produced any very satisfactory development of national character. Much more than political subdivision goes to the creation of a new Europe; nevertheless Arnold is probably right in supposing that uniformity of institutions, and a somewhat monotonous level of social conditions over a vast area, may have depressed and stunted the free and diversified growth of North American civilisation.

The literary criticism to be found in these letters shows a fastidious and delicate taste that had been nurtured almost too exclusively upon the masterpieces of classic antiquity. Homer he ranked far above Shakespeare, though one might think them too different for comparison; and he praises 'two articles in "Temple Bar" (1869), one on Tennyson, the other on Browning,' which were afterwards republished in a book that made some stir in its day, and has brought down upon its author the unquenchable resentment of his brother poets. He thought that both Macaulay and Carlyle were encouraging the English nation in its emphatic Philistinism, and thus counteracting his own exertions to lighten the darkness of earnest but opaque intelligences. As his interest in religious movements was acute, so his observations occasionally throw some light upon the exceedingly complicated problem of ascertaining the general drift of the English mind in regard to things spiritual. The force which is shaping the future, is it with the Ritualists or with the undogmatical disciples of a purely moral creed? With neither, Arnold replies; not with any of the orthodox religions, nor with the neo-religious developments which are pretending to supersede them.

'Both the one and the other give to what they call religion, and to religious ideas and discussions, too large and absorbing a place in human life. Man feels himself to be a more various and richly

endowed animal than the old religious theory of human life allowed, and he is endeavouring to give satisfaction to the long suppressed and imperfectly understood instincts of their varied nature.'

No man studied more closely than Arnold the intellectual tendencies of his generation, so that on the most difficult of contemporary questions this opinion is worth quoting, although the ritualistic leanings of the present day hardly operate to support it. But here, as in his published works, his religious utterances are somewhat ambiguous and oracular; and one welcomes the marking of a definite epoch in Church history when he writes emphatically that 'the 'Broad Church *among the clergy* may be said to have almost 'perished with Stanley.'

But correspondence that was never meant for publication is hardly a fair subject for literary criticism. Arnold seems to have written hurriedly, in the intervals of hard work, of journeyings to and fro upon his rounds of inspection, and of much social bustle; he had not the natural gift of letter-writing, and he probably did it more as a duty than a pleasure. He had none of the ever-smouldering irritability which compelled Carlyle to slash right and left of him at the people whom he met, at everything that he disliked, and every one whom he despised. Nor was he born to chronicle the small beer of everyday life in that spirit of contemplative quietism which is bred out of abundant leisure and retirement. A few lines from one of Cowper's letters may serve to indicate the circumstances in which 'our best letter-writer,' as Southey calls him, lived and wrote a hundred years ago in a muddy Buckinghamshire village:—

'A long confinement in the winter, and indeed for the most part in the autumn too, has hurt us both. A gravel walk, thirty yards long, affords but indifferent scope to the locomotive faculty; yet it is all that we have had to move in for eight months in the year, during thirteen years that I have been a prisoner here.'

If we compare this manner of spending one's days with Arnold's hasty and harassed existence among the busy haunts of men, we can understand that in this century a hard-working literary man has neither the taste nor the time for the graceful record of calm meditations, or for throwing a charm over commonplace details. And, on the whole, Arnold's correspondence, though it has some biographical value, must undoubtedly be relegated to the class

of letters that would never have been published upon their own intrinsic merits.

Carlyle's letters, on the other hand, fall into the opposite category; they stand on their own feet, they are as significant of style and character as Arnold's, and even Stanley's, letters were comparatively insignificant; they are the fearless outspoken expression of the humours and feelings of the moment, and it is probable that the writer did not trouble himself to consider whether they would or would not be published. In these respects they as nearly fulfil the authorised conditions of good letter-writing as any work of the sort that has been produced in our own generation, though one may be permitted some doubt in regard to improvisation; for the work is occasionally so clean cut and pointed, his strokes are so keen and straight to the mark, that it is difficult to believe the composition to be altogether unstudied. Whether any writer ever excelled in this or indeed in any other branch of the art literary without taking much trouble over it, is, in our judgement, an open question; but surely Carlyle must have selected and sharpened with some care the barbed epithets upon which he suspends his grotesque and formidable caricatures.

For example, he writes, in 1831, of Godwin, who still figures, in advanced age, as a martyr in the cause of good letter-writing: 'A bald, bushy-browed, thick, hoary, hale little figure, with a very long blunt characterless nose---the whole visit the most unutterable stupidity.' Lord Althorp is 'a thick, large, broad-whiskered, farmer-looking man.' O'Connell, 'a well-doing country shopkeeper with a bottle-green frock and brown scratch wig. . . . I quitted them all' (the House of Commons) with the highest contempt.' Of Thomas Campbell, the poet, it is written that 'his talk is small, contemptuous, and shallow; his face has a smirk which would befit a shopman or an auctioneer.' Wordsworth, 'an old, very loquacious, indeed quite prosing man.' Southey, 'the shallowest chin, prominent snubbed Roman nose, small carelined brow, the most vehement pair of faint hazel eyes I have ever seen.' There is a savage caricature of Roebuck, and so Carlyle goes on hanging up portraits of the notables whom he met and conversed with, to the great edification of these latter days. No more dangerous interviewer has ever practised professionally than this artist in epithets, on whom the outward visible figure of a man evidently made deep impressions; whereas the ordinary letter-writer is usually content to record the small

talk. As material for publication his correspondence had three singular advantages. His earlier letters were excellent, and we may hazard the generalisation that almost all first-class letter-writing, like poetry, has been inspired by the ardour and freshness and audacity of youth. He lived so long that these letters could be published very soon after his death without much damage to the susceptibilities of those whom his hard hitting might concern; and, lastly, his biographer was a man of nerve, who loved colour and strong lineaments, and would always sacrifice minor considerations to the production of a striking historical portrait. Undoubtedly, Carlyle's letters have this virtue—that they largely contribute to the creation of a true likeness of the writer, for in sketching other people he was also drawing himself. He could also paint the interior of a country house, as at Fryston, and his landscapes are vivid. He was, in short, an impressionist of the first order, who grouped all his details in subordination to a general effect, and never gave his correspondent a mere catalogue of trivial particulars.

It was originally in a letter to his brother that Carlyle wrote his celebrated description of an interview with Coleridge. No two men could be more different in taste or temperament, and yet any one who reads attentively Coleridge's letters may observe a certain similarity to Carlyle's writing, not only in the figured style and prophetic manner, but also in the tendency of their political ideas. In the matter of linguistic eccentricities, it may be guessed that both of them had been affected by the study of German literature; and in politics they had both a horror of disorder, an aversion to the ordinary Radicalism of their day, and a contempt for mechanic philosophy and complacent irreligion. Each of them had a strong belief in the power and duties of the State; but Coleridge held also that salvation lay in a reconstitution of the Church on a sound metaphysical basis, whereas for Carlyle all articles and liturgies were dying or dead. A comparison of these two supreme intellectual forces may help us to distinguish some of the most favourable conditions of good letter-writing. They were men of highly nervous mental constitution of mind, on whom the ideas and impressions that had been secreted produced an excitability that was discharged upon correspondents in a torrent of language, sweeping away considerations of reserve or self-regard, and submerging the commonplace bits of news and every-day observations which accumulate in the letters of respectable notabilities. To whomsoever the letters may

be addressed, they are in consequence equally good and characteristic. Carlyle's epistles to his wife and brother are among the best in the collection; and Coleridge threw himself with the same ardour into letters to Charles Lamb and to Lord Liverpool. It is this capacity for pouring out the soul in correspondence, for draining the bottom of one's heart to a friend, which, combined with exaltation under the stimulus of spleen or keen sensibility, raises correspondence to the high-water mark of English literature.

But in saying that these conditions are eminently favourable to the production of fine letter-writing, we do not mean to affirm that they are essential. Against such a theory it would be sufficient to quote Cowper, though he had the poetic fire, and was subject to the religious frenzy; and we know that repose and refinement have a tendency to develop good correspondents. Among these we may number Edward Fitzgerald, whose letters are perhaps the most artistic of any that have recently appeared, and may be placed without hesitation in the class of letters that have a high intrinsic merit independently of the writer's extraneous reputation; for Fitzgerald was a recluse with a tinge of misanthropy, nearly unknown to the outer world, except by one exquisite paraphrase of a Persian poem, and his popularity rests almost entirely upon his published correspondence. Of these letters, so excellent of their kind, can it be said that they have the note of improvisation, that they were written for a friend's eye, without thought or care for that ordeal of posthumous publication which has added, as we have been told, a fresh terror to death? The composition is exactly suited to the tone of easy, pleasant conversation; the writing has a serene flow, with ripples of wit and humour; sometimes occupied with East-Anglian rusticities and local colouring, sometimes with pungent literary criticisms; it is never exuberant, but nowhere dull or commonplace; the language is concise, with a sedulous nicety of expression. A man of delicate irony, living apart from the rough, tumbling struggle for existence, he was in most things the very opposite to Carlyle, whose 'French Revolution' he admired not much, and who, he thinks, 'ought to be laughed at a little.' Such a man was not likely to write even the most ordinary letter without a certain degree of mental preparation, without some elaboration of thought, or solicitude as to form and finish, for all which processes he had ample leisure. It may be noticed that he never condescends to the travelling journal, and

that his voyaging impressions are given in a few fine strokes ; but, although he was a homekeeping Englishman, he was free from household cares, nor did he keep up that obligatory family correspondence which, when it is published to exhibit the domestic habits and affections of an eminent person, becomes ever after a dead weight upon his biography.

In endeavouring to analyse the charm of these delightful letters, we may suggest that they gain their special flavour from his talent for compounding them, like a skilful *chef de cuisine*, out of various materials or intellectual condiments assorted and dexterously blended. He is an able and accomplished egoist, one of the few modern Englishmen who are able to plant themselves contentedly, like a tree, in one spot, and who prefer books to company, the sedentary to the stirring life. He was not cut off, like Cowper, a hundred years earlier, from the outer world in winter and rough weather, yet he had few visitors and went abroad little ; so that he had ample leisure for perusal and re-perusal of the classic masterpieces, ancient and modern, and for surveying the field of contemporary literature. His letters to Fanny Kemble have the advantage of unity in tone that belongs to a series written to the same person, though the absence of replies is apt to produce the effect of a monologue. How far good letter-writing depends upon the course of exchange, upon the stimulus of pleasant and prompt replies, is a question not easily answered, since the correspondence on both sides of two good writers is very rarely put together. Mrs. Kemble had certain fixed rules which must have been fatal to the free epistolary spirit. 'I never write,' she said, 'until I am written to ; I always write when 'I am written to, and I make a point of always re- turning the same amount of paper that I receive ;' but at any rate it is evident that Fitzgerald's letters to her were regularly answered. He had a light hand on descriptions of season and scenery ; he could give the autumnal atmosphere, the awakening of leaf and flower in spring, the distant roar of the German Ocean on the East-Anglian coast. As he could record his daily life without the minute prolixity of a diary, so he could throw off criticisms on books without falling into the manner of an essayist. In regard to the 'fuliginous and spasmodic Carlyle,' he asks doubtfully whether he with all his genius will not subside into the Level that covers, and consists of, decayed literary vegetation. 'And Dickens, with all *his* genius, but whose Men and Women act and talk already after a more obsolete fashion

'than Shakespeare's?' None of the contemporary poets—Tennyson, Browning, or Swinburne—seem to have entirely satisfied him; he loved the quiet landscapes and rural tales of Crabbe, who is now read by very few; and he quotes with manifest enjoyment the lines:

'In a small cottage on the rising ground,
West of the waves, and just beyond the sound.'

'The sea,' he writes, 'somehow talks to one of old things,' probably because it is changeless by comparison with the land; and a man whose life is still and solitary is affected by the transitory aspect of natural things, because he can watch them pass. As old friends drop off he touches in his letters upon the memories of days that are gone, and he consorts more and more with the personages of his favourite poets and romancers living thus, as he says, among shadows.

Here is a man to whom correspondence was a real solace and a vehicle of thought and feeling, not a mere notebook of travel, nor a conduit of confidential small talk. A faint odour of the seasons hangs round some of these letters, of the sunshine and rain, of dark days and roads blocked with snow, of the first spring crocus and the faded autumnal garden plots. We can perceive that, as his retirement became habitual with increasing age, the correspondence became his main outlet of ideas and sensations, taking more and more the place of friendly visits and personal discussion as a channel of intercourse with the external world. The Hindu sages despised action as destructive of thought; and undoubtedly the cool secluded vale of life is good for the cultivation of letter-writing, in one who has the artistic hand, and to whom this method of gathering up the fruits of reading and meditation, the harvest of a quiet eye, comes easily. In many respects the letters of Fitzgerald, like his life, are in strong contrast to Carlyle's; and Fitzgerald was somewhat startled by the publication of Carlyle's reminiscences. He thinks that, on the whole, 'they had better 'have been kept unpublished;' though on reading the 'Biography' he writes: 'I did not know that Carlyle was 'so good, grand, and even loveable, till I read the letters 'which Froude now edits.' He himself was not likely to give the general reader more than he wished to be known about his private affairs; and if one or two remarks with a sting in them appeared when these letters were first published in a magazine, they have been carefully excerpted from the book. The mellow music of his tones, the self-

restraint and meditative attitude, are pleasant to the reader after the turbid utterances and twisted language of Carlyle; we may compare the stirring rebellious spirit brooding over the folly of mankind with the man who takes humanity as he finds it, and is content to make the best of a world in which he sees not much, beyond art and nature and a few old friends, to interest him. Upon the whole, we may place Carlyle and Fitzgerald, each in his very different manner, at the head of all the letter-writers of the generation to which they belong, which is not precisely our own. It is to be recollected that a man must be dead before he can win reputation in this particular branch of literature, and that he cannot be fairly judged until time has removed many obstacles to unreserved publication. But both Carlyle and Fitzgerald had long lives.

Mr. Stevenson, whose letters are the latest important contribution to this department of the national library, died early, in the full force of his intellect, at the zenith of his fame as a writer of romance. His letters have been edited by Mr. Sidney Colvin, with all the sympathy and insight into character that are inspired by congenial tastes and close friendship; and his preface gives an excellent account of the conditions, physical and mental, under which they were written, and of the limitations observed in the editing of them.

'Begun,' Mr. Colvin says, 'without a thought of publicity, not simply to maintain an intimacy undiminished by separation, they assumed in the course of two or three years a bulk so considerable, and contained so much of the matter of his daily life and thoughts, that it by-and-by occurred to him . . . that "some kind of a book" might be extracted out of them after his death. . . . In a correspondence so unreserved, the duty of suppression and selection must needs be delicate. Belonging to the race of Scott and Dumas, of the romantic narrators and creators, Stevenson belonged no less to that of Montaigne and the literary egotists. . . . He was a watchful and ever interested observer of the motions of his own mind.'

The whole passage, too long to be quoted, suggests an instructive analysis of the mental qualities and disposition that go to make a good letter-writer—a dash of egotism, sensitiveness to outward impressions, literary charm, the habit of keeping a frank and familiar record of every day's moods, thoughts, and doings, the picturesque surroundings of a strange land. In these journal letters from Samoa the canon of improvisation is to a certain extent infringed, for Stevenson wrote with publicity in distant view; and the

depressing influence of remoteness is in his case overcome, for he lived in tropical Polynesia, 'far off amid the melan-'choly main,' and had speech with his correspondent only at long intervals. But it is the privilege of genius to disconcert the rules of criticism; the letters have none of the vices of the diary, the trivialities are never dull, the incidents are uncommon or uncommonly well told, and the writer is never caught looking over his shoulder at posterity.

For extracts there is now little space left in this article; but we may quote, to show Stevenson's style of landscape-painting, a few lines describing a morning in Samoa after a heavy gale:—

'I woke this morning to find the blow quite ended. The heaven was all a mottled grey; even the East quite colourless. The downward slope of the island veiled in wafts of vapour, blue like smoke; not a leaf stirred on the tallest tree. Only three miles below me on the barrier reef I could see the individual breakers curl and fall, and hear their conjunct roaring rise, like the roar of a thoroughfare close by.'

It is good for the imaginative letter-writer to live within sight and sound of the sea, to hear the long roll, and to see from his window 'a nick of the blue Pacific.' It is also good for him to be within range of savage warfare, and to take long rough rides in a disturbed country. On one such occasion he writes:—

'Conceive such an outing, remember the pallid brute that lived in Skerryvore like a weevil in a biscuit, and receive the intelligence that I was rather the better for my journey. Twenty miles ride, sixteen fences taken, ten of the miles in a drenching rain, seven of them fasting and in the morning chill, and six stricken hours' discussion with the political interpreter, to say nothing of sleeping in a native house, at which many of our excellent literati would look askance of itself.'

The feat might not seem miraculous to a captain of frontier irregulars in hard training, but for a delicate novelist in weak health it was pluckily done. These letters would be readable if Stevenson had written nothing else, though of course their worth is doubled by our interest in a man of singular talent who died prematurely. They illustrate the tale of his life and portray his character; and they form an addition, valuable in itself, and unique as a variety, to the series of memorable English letter-writers.

Mr. Colvin mentions, in his preface, that Stevenson's talk was irresistibly sympathetic and inspiring, full of matter and mirth. It cannot be denied that between corre-

spondence and conversation, regarded as fine arts, there is a close kinship; and very similar reasons have been alleged for the common belief that both are on the decline. Whether such a belief has any solid foundation in the case of letter-writing, we may be warranted in doubting. Observations of this sort, which have a false air of acuteness and profundity, are repeated periodically. The remark so constantly made at this moment, that nowadays people read nothing but magazines, was made by Coleridge early in this century; and Southey prophesied the ruin of good letters from the penny post. It is true that the number of letters written must have increased enormously; it is also true that many more are published than heretofore, and that as a great many of these are not above mediocrity, are valueless as literature, and of little worth biographically, they produce on the disappointed reader the effect of a general depreciation of the standard. Nevertheless, this article will have been written to little purpose, unless it has shown fair cause for rejecting such a conclusion, and for maintaining that, although fine letter-writers, like poets, are few and far between, yet they have not been wanting in our own time, and are not likely to disappear. There will always be men, like Coleridge or Carlyle, whose impetuous thoughts and humoristic conceptions cannot perpetually submit to the forms and limitations and delays of printing and publishing, but must occasionally demand instant liberation and prompt delivery by the natural process of private letters. And although the stir and bustle of the world is increasing, so that quiet corners in it are not easily kept, yet it is probable that the race of literary recluses—of those who pass their days in reading books, in watching the course of affairs, and in corresponding with a select circle of friends—will also continue. Whether Englishwomen, who write letters up to a certain point better than Englishmen, will now rise, as Frenchwomen have done, to the highest line, and why they have not done so heretofore, are points that we have no space here for taking up.

But it is the exceptional peculiarity of letters, as a form of literature, that the writer can never superintend their publication. During his lifetime he has no control over them, they are not in his hands; and they do not appear until after his death. He must rely entirely, therefore, upon the discretion of his editor, who has to balance the wishes of a family, or the susceptibilities of an influential

party in politics or religion, against his own notions of duty towards a departed friend, or against his artistic inclination towards presenting to the world a true and unvarnished picture of some remarkable personage. He may resolve, as Froude did in the case of Carlyle, that 'the sharpest scrutiny' is the condition of enduring fame, and may determine not to conceal the frailties or the underlying motives which explain conduct and character. He may refuse, as in the case of Cardinal Manning, to set up a smooth and whitened monumental effigy, plastered over with colourless panegyric, and may insist on showing a man's true proportions in the alternate light and shadow through which every life naturally and inevitably passes. But such considerations would lead us beyond our special subject into the larger field of biography; and we must be content, on the present occasion, with this endeavour to sketch in bare outline the history and developement of English letter-writing, and to examine very briefly the elementary conditions that conduce to success in an art that is universally practised, but in which high excellence is so very rarely attained.

ART. III.—*The Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes. Dancing. With Musical Examples. By Mrs. LILLY GROVE, F.R.G.S., and other Writers. London: 1895.*

‘THE young of all creatures cannot be quiet in their bodies ‘or in their voices,’ says the Athenian, speaking, as we are told, from the auditorium where old age sits, a wisely indifferent spectator rather than an interested actor, in life’s theatre. ‘They,’ he continues, ‘are always wanting to move ‘and cry out . . . but whereas other animals have no perception of order or disorder in their movements . . . to us ‘the gods have given the pleasurable sense of rhythm and ‘harmony.’ So with one broad serene touch the great Greek master dismisses—not perhaps without a smile—the question of the origin, dual in its divine and physical, intellectual and material birth, and supplies a definition of that art of movement he would have regulated in its practice by laws of health, beauty, and virtue, and whose use he would advocate in the service of that ideal state reasoned of by philosophers, dreamt of by poets, and prophesied by saints.

Upon this basis of movement as a natural attribute of all animate bodies and of the sense of rhythm—the added gift of a higher organisation of feeling, perception, and intellect in man—rest the two wide distinctions underlying the series of facts, technical, geographical, and chronological, supplied by the history of dancing: the distinction, that is, between dancing as an exercise, a social exercise, as in the domestic dances of the Greeks and in the modern ball-room, an educational exercise, as in the gymnasium and the modern dancing class, and dancing as an art: in the first place an ideal art, having for its aim the presentment of movement, measured and rhythmical, in its highest perfection of grace, appealing to the eye as directly as a sculptor’s statue or a painter’s picture, pursuing that beauty of form after which Plato would have men follow the scent like hounds; in the second place as a composite art, affecting the senses and expressing the passions and emotions, utilising movement as the vocabulary of sentiment. To quote from the more comprehensive category of Francis Peacock, the old dancing master (the perfect gentleman, painter of miniatures in a superior style, and the associate of the best society, as a manuscript note in his book informs us—a book of which, with unconscious humour, he devotes the proceeds to the support of a lunatic asylum), dancing is an art employing ‘position, attitude, gesture, ex-

'pression, contrast, and figure' as the symbols of feeling and sensation. Under this aspect the definition becomes indeed a complex one. Such dancing infringes, as in the Roman pantomime, upon the monopoly of imitation claimed by the actor. 'You see!' was the criticism of the renowned dancer Pylades upon the blind dance of his pupil Hylas. It invades the prerogative of diction appertaining to the orator. 'I hear!' was the equally celebrated encomium pronounced by the cynic Demetrius upon the dancer who danced in silence before him. Last, but not least, it usurps those more unqualifiable functions of music—its most intimate if not, as sometimes asserted, its inseparable ally—when sound is regarded as the medium through which the senses are stimulated to the extremes of excitement or soothed to the most enervating lassitude. Consideration of the art of dancing under this form explains, had not history itself been the interpreter, Plato's repeated injunction to dance only 'what is good.' It was a rule justifying in its breach the severe censures of the early Church of Chrysostom and the vindictive denunciations of England's Puritan forefathers, in whose eyes the broadest path of destruction would seem hardly wide enough for the passage of wayfarers engaged in that prohibited pastime. But, while these abstract divisions afford a method by the aid of which so exhaustive a subject may be rendered thinkable, it is scarcely necessary to point out that phases of this art theoretically separable are in practice continually combined one with another; that while one typical quality of distinction may be dominant in any given dance, all may, even must, be to a certain extent present. Dancing, not excluding the posture dancing of the East, cannot be well conceived that does not in some manner, remote or not, imply motion—that is, exercise and action—nor any, however grotesque, as in the dances of savages, that does not, according to the perceptions of the country and period to which it belongs, presuppose a correspondence to some idea of symmetry and rhythm in its execution—that does not, in fact, predicate some appreciation of artistic excellence—nor, finally, is it possible to divorce from such movements, or approximations to measure and symmetry, the expression of some feeling, it may be imitative or it may be personal, on the part of the dancer, nor, on the other hand, to divest the effect on the mind of the sensitive spectator of some degree of reciprocal emotion.

Viewed from the first standing-point—that is, as an exercise—dancing owes a primary and unpicturesque interest to

the physiological and educational developement and discipline of the body. In this rudimentary phase Socrates becomes its apologist and Locke its apostle. 'I think,' the latter philosopher declares, taking his opinions with the undue seriousness characteristic of his day, 'that they [children] should 'be taught to dance as soon as they are capable of learning 'it.' But he is careful scrupulously to discriminate and to commend the acquisition of the accomplishment only in so far as it will conduce to the propriety and ease of a man's deportment in the conduct of far different matters. 'As for 'the jigging part and the figures,' he counts them but little. In which opinion, as doctors who disagree, we may compare his heresy with the doctrine of his Greek predecessor.

Yet even the 'jigging part' has aspects not wholly unworthy of the diligent regard of the most artistically unappreciative utilitarian; for there are truly dance records serious and formidable of import, shedding strange gleams and colours upon the ever-recurrent problem—the vexed enigma whose riddle is still to read—of those subtle relationships existing between mind and body, exemplified long ago in another art by the exorcism of Saul's infirmity by the music of David's harp, and symbolised in the *rhythmical* flow of the remedial water springs in the Temple of Æsculapius, alluded to by Mr. Pater when he recounts the boyhood episode of the sickness and healing of Marius the Epicurean. Of such records are the chronicles of those terrible frenzies, the dancing manias, whose history Hecker has summarised in his 'Epidemics of the Middle Ages.' Few scenes can equal in fantastic horror those that he describes occasioned by the eruption of that mental pestilence—as he denominates it—which from the thirteenth century onwards bore the alternate names of St. John's or St. Vitus's dance. In vain priests exorcised the victims of whose cure physicians despaired. Shrines were consecrated, saints—was it some memory of Salome's death-bringing dance that associated the Baptist's name with the unholy mania?—were invoked for the mitigation of the plague; but the stricken men and women danced on. Town after town of Northern Europe became the theatre where migratory hordes of frantic dancers assembled together. The cities of Germany and Belgium and the Lower Rhine caught one by one the infection. In Metz at one time it was reported that eleven hundred dancers, with their camp followers, gangs of vagabond mimics and bands of hired musicians, held their hideous revels in the city streets, while in each place of their sojourning hundreds of curious

onlookers succumbed to the contagion and broke out in sympathetic extravagances. The whole incident reads like the story of a waking nightmare. It was not only a transitory episode. From year to year the pest raged nearly unchecked; at so late a date as the beginning of the sixteenth century the season of St. John's festival was still the prelude to renewed outbreaks. A last pilgrimage of the victims was recorded in 1623, one of the pilgrims being then on her thirty-second visit to the shrine of St. Vitus. From that time the mania as an epidemic may be said to have become extinct, although its tradition may still linger, as Mrs. Grove hints, in such ceremonies as that of the 'dancing procession' to the shrine of St. Willibrord at Echternach, where, in 1892, 14,000 dancers were gathered together to celebrate the ancient rites. Other countries were not exempt from the affliction. France had its own 'danse de St. Guy,' and Italy, in the mysterious hysterical malady known as tarantism, rivalled, if it did not eclipse, the melodramatic scenes enacted in the German towns. This disease, like its sister plagues, found its one cure or alleviation in the wild and varied rhythm of musical sounds.

'In Italy from the middle of the fourteenth century,' says Hecker, 'the furies of the *Dance* brandished their scourge over afflicted mortals. . . . Nothing but the flute or cithern afforded them relief. At the sound of these instruments they awoke as it were by enchantment [their state, erroneously attributed to the sting of a poisonous spider, being one of extreme and often mortal lassitude], opened their eyes, moving slowly at first, according to the measure of the music, and were, as the time quickened, hurried on to the most passionate dance. . . . Country people ignorant of music evinced on those occasions an unusual degree of grace . . . cities and villages resounded throughout the summer with the notes of fifes, clarionets, and Turkish drums . . . patients everywhere looked to dancing as their sole remedy.'

Nor, be it observed, was it movement alone that brought relief in the paroxysm; it was movement to measure and rhythm; even the music, to be efficacious as a part of the remedial agency, was subject to special classifications. 'There was one kind of tarantella . . . lively and impassioned, to which wild dithyrambic songs were adapted; another set to idyllian songs of green fields and shady groves,' and each mood of the sufferer craved its corresponding melody. These are surely startling pictures of tendencies which may lie dormant at the root of a pastime Western educationists regard as a trivial amusement and Puritans condemn as a debasing frivolity.

It is a curious fact that dancing and sickness have always from time to time and in different countries appeared in a closer connexion than their respective characteristics would seem to warrant, and, though it is a digression, it is interesting to place side by side with these mediæval records the accounts of forms of dancing closely associated with the cure of sickness in some eastern countries. There the dance itself has no remedial or curative character; it is not, as in Europe, either as a symptom or as a healing exercise that it appears; it is apparently a mere appendage to the other propitiatory offerings made by the priest, or devil dancer, to the demons. For an old Cingalese poem upon the subject declares, 'Should the sickness be a misfortune [*i.e.* from natural causes], and not a devil's sickness, 'the capua's [devil dancer's] labour is vain.' Yet, perhaps, his invocation to his darker deities is not without analogy and resemblance to those we can imagine to have been uttered by priests and patients at the altars of their patrons, St. John and St. Vitus. 'O thou great Black God, preserve 'the sick person by cheering him. . . . He (the Black God) 'loves the smell of the flowers. Thou Black Devil, see the 'light of the candles this night. Dearly thou lovest white and 'clean things!' So runs part of the prayer ascribed to the priest who, 'dancing like a mad dog' for twenty hours in a white dress amidst the god-beloved flowers and the burning lights—those catholic adjuncts to altar worship of all the world over—makes intercession for the sick, while 'the 'patient beholding bows her head.'

More mediæval still is the poem following in the same volume, containing a descriptive narrative of a masquerade referred to by Mrs. Grove, which, we must observe, is a ceremony totally distinct from the devil-dancing rites. This entertainment, the opening verses inform us, was given for the encouragement and distraction of a sick queen who was anxiously expecting her son's birth. In a great phantasmagoria masker after masker here appears upon the scene, each apparently executing an appropriate dance. Masks of men and of women; masks of demons, whose name was certainly legion; masks of the beautiful woman, five in one, entwined like embroidery, perfectly embracing, shining in loveliness like images of gold; masks of tigers and wolves, of monstrous birds and ferocious beasts; masks of devils and of the devil king; a mask suitable to the special occasion of the mother of the beautiful new-born son, and to end all the mask of Death himself, who enters, as

in some old mystery play, to join in the revels; and after Death (it is not difficult to attach an allegorical significance to the circumstance, but hard strictly to define it) comes one last laggard, solitary living figure, bearing the distinguishing badges, emblems with which we are familiar—the wallet and the shell—the figure of a pilgrim.

But setting aside both the educational and the hygienic aspect of the question, it is, to proceed further in the subject, undeniable that pleasure, and pleasure of the keenest kind, in the measured exercise of the limbs is an inborn and universal instinct in man, woman, and child. Movement for movement's sake, the rudimental form of all dancing, is a love akin to the love of free air and open space, and this instinct is the raw material, as it were, out of which the art in all its more perfect developements has sprung into being. Even its lowest manifestations have a charm and attraction of their own, and we cannot ignore them. It is not, despite many assertions to the contrary, only the excitement of the attendant risk that fascinates the spectator in watching the exploits of the acrobat or the often revolting exhibitions of the contortionist. No doubt the danger lends a barbarous zest to the rope-dancer's achievements or the mountebank's skill—'*salto mortale*, the 'somersault, the deadly leap,' Florio's old dictionary indicates how close was the association of peril with the very commonest of the tumbler's feats. But there is undoubtedly a more salutary and a totally independent gratification in viewing the cadence of motion (to borrow the term) inseparable from their performances, combined with the grace of posture a perfection of balance seldom fails to produce, unless—the proviso is unfortunately needed—the limbs are intentionally distorted to satisfy the gross taste for the disfigurement and caricature of the human form. This, however, is a taste, one may add, not restricted to the world of the professional acrobat, nor confined to the lower grades of civilisation, nor to those periods we are too ready to name the dark ages, though it is a curious trait of mediæval art that the girl Salome, 'of terrible renown,' for whom the pitying heart of one poet—Charles Turner Tennyson—has pleaded in one of his most plaintive sonnets, should be represented acrobat-wise dancing upon her hands.

On this fundamental joy in motion rests likewise how much of the delight of a children's game! In games of action the impulse to movement finds itself provided with an aim and a rule; many, indeed, are indistinguishable in their nature from dances properly so called.

'Kiss in the ring,' 'Nuts of May,' to quote those most familiar of all, have each their song-accompaniment and dance measure, while their circular form may possibly place them amongst those figures claiming for ancestry the sun rites of ancient days. Indeed, it would seem, if we may make bold to accept the hypotheses of experts in such lore, that the banished godhead of 'day's great star' has stamped the whole earth over with relics of its foregone and forgotten worship, and that what Pizarro's historian, Arthur Helps, has graphically denominated the idolatry of idolatry, the inevitable astral worship, which held its last great stronghold in the Peruvian Land of the Sun, is still symbolised in every land—in Spain, in France, in England and Germany, in Celtic sword dances, and in the blazing fires of St. John's Eve. Has, we are tempted to inquire, the ring of the fairies' dance, round whose greenest circles of trodden grass so many traditions of elf-life linger, any connexion with the myth?

Between the acrobat's feats and the child's game there is no marked transition stage dividing the dance which is mainly an exercise from the dance which is mainly an art. A greater degree of intricacy in figure and form, a stricter and more exact compliance with laws of rhythm and symmetry—the narrower limits art sets for the attainment of more definite if more infinitely varying effects—these conditions constitute the chief difference which makes movement not only a direct pleasure to the performer but a source of indirect pleasure to the beholder. With this in mind it is not surprising to find, in periods when social life had always in it something of the nature of a pageant where men and women served as part of the decoration of the scene, that dancing as a social exercise should touch hands with dancing as an ornamental art, and become, as it were, part of the play. In the West the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century dances of Italy, France, and Spain, such as the pavane and the minuet in all their varieties, appealed, by their pictorial qualities, no less to the spectators than to those who took active part in them. To excel in these was, according to numerous anecdotes, a highroad to honour in other courts besides those of love. Indeed, rivalry in the excellence of dancing seems persistently to have occupied an important place in the jealous heart-burnings of all times and ranks and nationalities, of rich and of poor, of peasant and of courtier,

proving the art to be as conservative in its elements as it is democratic in its endowments.

‘ Let him give her gay gold rings,
Or tufted gloves, were they ne’er so gay ;
Or were her lovers lords or kings,
They should not carry the wench away ! ’

But, alas ! the discarded lover of the old ballad dialogue printed amongst the Alleyn papers goes on to say that the fickle-hearted maiden’s new love ‘ daunces wonders well,’ and with his dancing has done what lords and kings might have striven fruitlessly to accomplish. By which complaint we may place one of the odes of the great Persian heretic Háfiz. ‘ Alas, that those bold Lūliāns [the strolling dancers and ‘ singers of his time] should have borne off my heart’s content ! ’ is the lament of Dante’s Eastern contemporary, the half mystical, half material fourteenth-century poet of Shīrāz.

Most, however, of what one may call tableau dances, save where employed for a stage spectacle or an exhibition of amateur display, are become or are fast becoming, as far as the wealthier classes are concerned, a feature of bygone days. Are, one speculates, the national dances, the dances of the people and peasants still observed in accordance with traditional customs, also predestined in the near future to lose their significance by the intermingling of races, and to forfeit their individuality by the innovations of newer fashions ? Are the Scotch reels, the Irish jigs, the English hornpipes, the innumerable dances of Spain and its provinces, fandangos and the notorious sarabands, alternately censured and prohibited, tolerated and countenanced (and witnessed if not practised) by the prelates of Church councils ; are the mazurkas of the Pole, the csárdás of the Hungarian, all doomed to undergo the same fate and to find their representation confined to the theatrical stage ? Or is it a possibility that, viewing the tenacity of figure some of these dance histories before us register, an art, almost more than any other art the property of all, should retain a certain degree of permanence in its simpler modes and more conventionalised features ? that being rudimentarily an art, one may say, of the body, it may possess some stereotyped because mainly physical qualities, thus contrasting with the more fluctuating tendencies of painting and poetry, which, being primarily conceptions of the mind and imagination, mirror forth century by century the fundamental changes in habits of

thought and fancy consequent on successive phases of education and culture?

Curious enough, certainly, are the histories of some of these so-called national dances, but even more interesting are the wanderings of others, dances which have acclimatised themselves, now here, now there, in corners of the earth most distant from the land of their birth, discarding one by one their original features, and gradually assuming the costumes and adapting themselves to the demands and manners of the country of their final adoption. Of such migratory and eventually nationalised dances the morris, so often referred to as the national dance of England, affords a conspicuous example. It is, at all events, one concerning which we have the most ample and elaborate details, carefully collected and compiled by Francis Douce, Shakespeare's commentator, in his 'Essay on the Morris.' Taking for granted, despite the disputes of the learned (Mrs. Grove would assign it a Portuguese origin), that its derivation is correctly indicated by its name, morris, moresque, Moorish—the blackened face of its earlier performers corroborates the accuracy of the assumption—the first picture we have of the dance when it had fairly started upon its northern pilgrimage is drawn by Tabourot, priest and canon of Lengres, the most authoritative exponent of the art of dancing in the Middle Ages. Tabourot's early memory of the morris, as he describes it, was of a little boy, with blackened face and jingling bells and yellow dress, dancing up and down a hall of early sixteenth-century France. Such is the quaint prefatory portrait of the famous morris-dancer, who down to comparatively recent times has played so prominent a part in English feasts and festivals, at Whitsun-ales and on May Days, at Christmas mummeries and marriage merry-makings. The little boy, with his black face and yellow dress, seems shortly, at least in Flanders and England, to have ended his solitary reign; for soon we learn that he has become but one member of a gay and very motley company, and the dance has varied its form and its appendages according to the variation in the number of the players. New accessories appear. Besides the jingle of the little boy's bells the clash of swords is heard as the dance borrows these weapons from the dance of matachins (fools), the matachins themselves being possibly the inheritors of the arms borne by the priests of Mars. From this dance also may have been taken the figure of the jester, who shortly seems amalgamated as one of the *dramatis per-*

sonæ. Next comes the hobby-horse. This, it is suggested, was one of many loans from the 'Feast of Fools,' the 'Lord of Unreason,' and other carnivalesque extravaganzas of the period. And, most important of all the new recruits, the May games, of which the morris was at first a subordinate adjunct, lent it on a long lease a May-lady, a May-lord, and the inevitable Piper Tom. Then Robin Hood himself, the crowned king of outlaws, with all his greenwood train, Friar Tuck, Little John, Will Scarlet, and Maid Marian (identified with the May-lady), take their part singly or collectively among the mummers, and the legitimate morris dance becomes more or less inextricably confused with May's own special observances, in which the green boughs of the May Day of ancient Rome made a new link with the long past and the dead gods of lost centuries. Thus enlarged and intertwined with past and present, the morris became the peculiar object of the anathemas of the Reformers of the Great Rebellion, when kings, papists, and merriment were abolished and excommunicated. In this form too it was resuscitated at the Restoration, to outlive, with new and numerous transformations, its old England-wide popularity, lingering for many years in precarious survival, here and there to be seen in remote villages and among the dwellers in northern and midland counties, with its nosegays and ribbons a trifle faded and its swords somewhat blunt and rusted, but still lingering among us to this very day. Walter Scott, in his note on the disastrous episode of the Shrovetide revelry in the 'Fair Maid of Perth,' after quoting Handel's testimony as to England's peculiar attachment to this dance—Scotland evidently shared the affection—describes minutely the morris-dancer's costume, treasured among other civic relics in the town where the scene of his romance is laid. Two hundred and fifty-two little bells were, he tells us, fastened to the dress; these were divided into sets of twelve, and each set was tuned to a musical interval. What skill on the part of the dancer was required, whose business it was, by his regulated movements, to ring these mimic chimes in something approaching harmony, one can barely imagine. One may observe in passing that such arts were not without their market value; so late as the end of the seventeenth century the price of a dancing girl sold in Scotland by her mother (her rescue was the work of Sir Walter's grandfather) was thirty pounds Scots.

The Betley stained glass window, reproduced in Mrs. Grove's book, is a pictorial representation of the anglicised

morris-dancers; the period to which Mr. Douce assigns the actual window is Henry VIII.'s reign, the costumes, however, belonging to Edward IV.'s period. In Reid's edition of Shakespeare's 'King Henry IV.,' part i., an engraving taken from the same window is given, with a supplementary commentary of many pages upon the nine figures it contains, in connexion with the Shakespearian allusions to the May Day celebrations of his time. Here we have all the traditional characters depicted—Maid Marian (Maid Myriam, as one too ingenious writer spells her name, a spelling intended to recall the Miriam dance of the Red Sea passage), Tom the piper, a friar, a hobby-horse, and various anonymous dancers, conjectured, according to divers authorities, to stand for a lover (by the flower in his cap), a clown, a squire, a Fleming, a Spaniard, and a Morisco. Lastly and unmistakeably is a fool, though here too is trouble for the anxious critic's mind. For the fool, the artificial, allowed, or fool counterfeit, with his jester's livery of office—the office 'none but he that hath wit can perform, and none but he that wants it will'—has a twin brother, a fool superfluous, possibly a Bavian (not Barian, as by a slip Mrs. Grove misprints it), or idiot fool.* But of far more intrinsic interest is the design for goldsmith's work, from an engraving on copper by Israel von Meckenen, given in Mr. Douce's volume. It is a signal instance of the adaptation of the common features of contemporary life to decorative use. For grace of action and delicacy of construction this design, to employ an appropriate phrase, 'bears the bell,' besides illustrating those figures in the morris which were not the monopoly of its English version. The exact number of the figures represented is the same as in the Betley window. Six of the dancers are poised, with an exquisite sense of lightness and gaiety expressed in their postures, qualities wholly lacking in the somewhat clownish attitudes of the English design, amongst the interlaced branches of a widely spreading tree; the pointed foliage of the boughs conveys a suggestion of holly. Upon the forked central stem stands a sedate May-lady, placed thus in the midst of her attendants, in all the quaint childish dignity of her tall head-gear and narrow trailing gown. Nothing more totally unlike the Maid Marian of general, if slandered, fame than this Flemish morris queen could be conceived.

* See 'Two Noble Kinsmen,' act 3, scene v., 'Enter four countrymen and the Bavian.'

Below her are placed the jester and the pipe-player. Is it, one questions, remembering other emblematic designs of the 'Dance of Death' by the same hand, with an intentional touch of irony that these two alone of all the nine figures have their footing upon the solid earth-ground? Also, if one may venture upon the investigation of a side issue, is there any allegorical meaning in the causeless introduction of the dog who lies at the feet of the fool? Has it—it may be only one of those chance coincidences which are the will-o'-the-wisps of thought—any connexion or kinship with that other dog who in the old pack of fortune-telling cards follows at the heels of the 'matto' (the mad fool), or in another card of the same gipsy Tarot, bays at the moon, of which the beams, according to the wide-spread belief or superstition, are the source of many of mankind's lunacies? And once again, to pursue one more link in the chain, is it by mere accident that the ancient Saxon 'Idol of the Moon' is represented, in that curious work of Richard Verstigan 'The Restitution of Decayed Intelligence,' published 1605, clothed in a jester's dress and wearing upon its head the familiar fool's cowl, where the so-called ass's ears indisputably must have been intended to represent the horns of the crescent?

But to return from this digression. Leaving this brief sketch of the migrations and transformations of one individual dance, which must serve as a general type of others of like kind, we pass on from that midway station where dancing from its rudimental condition as a mere exercise has become part of a social pageant, to a different region of thought—to the inquiry of what dancing has been, or may still be, as an art, boldly claiming its place in the ranks of the arts which are its fellows, as the ideal presentment of beauty in movement and the complex presentment and expression, realistic or symbolic, by movement, of emotion and sensation. It is naturally to the historians and critics of Greek arts that we turn for testimony concerning the height of perfection attainable in the art which is of all arts pre-eminently the art of youth; and 'you Greeks,' cried Egypt's priest—the quotation is made by John Addington Symonds—'you Greeks are always young!'

Yet where, the initial difficulty encounters us at the very first step, can critic or scholar seek for inscribed images of that most transitory of things a movement? It is on the face of it an almost hopeless quest. To demand such an image would be the demand—to steal the phrase—of an

ambitious beggar. True we can look at a statue or study a vase, gaze on a dancing bacchante, or a Greek frieze, but the despondent conviction remains with us that the survey conveys to our imagination little more than, to use a metaphor, is conveyed to our ear by the single shattered note of some exquisite melody. For is it not in the succession of movement to movement, of posture to posture, as in the succession of note to note in melody, that the essence of the art is hidden? Whereas in these dead images the sequence of the dance's pulse is lost, the expansion of its vitality is caged, crystallised into an attitude, and frozen into a posture. The voice of the singer does not leave less trace behind it than do the movements of the dancer, and the executant artists of either art can bequeath to posterity nothing more solid than the descriptive legend of their skill, the tradition of their fame, the barren register of technical method, or the scientific analysis of the rules and figures of their invention.

Although it may seem a devious track to follow, perhaps the perusal of books such as that of Mr. Symonds upon the Greek poets may bring the unclassical reader to some kind of imaginative conception of the heights to which this art of movement, dedicated in countless rites to the sacred service of the gods, may have attained in those days when choral song and choral dance went hand in hand, when 'separate forms of music and of metre' were devoted, with the unerring instinct of a truly 'æsthetic race, to the expression of the several moods and 'passions of the soul,' and when, as the same writer asserts in another place, the Greek temperament was 'no less 'sensitive to the refinements of rhythmical movement than 'to the beauties of the human body.' To us Northerns, to whom, for the most part, the associations of the very word of dancing are the antitheses to the associations of beauty in art, and whose powers of sympathetic imagination are even more inflexibly rigid than the moral code inherited from Puritan and Covenanter, in which the doctrine of the sanctity of ugliness rivalled the catholic creed of the sanctity of dirt, the realisation of daily life in a world permeated throughout by an active sense of beauty—beauty of form, beauty of sound, beauty of motion—has become almost an impossibility, opposed as it is to the experiences of our own time and country. 'How shall we,' Symonds himself questions in his concluding chapter on the 'Genius 'of Greek Art,' 'whose souls are aged and wrinkled with

'long years of humanity,' bridge over the gulf dividing us from that Greek-land he depicts so vividly, picturing it, perhaps, in rose-coloured tints, but in a picture surely drawn with the clear insight of a true love, and making plain even to the understanding of the unlearned the width of the chasm, a spiritual distance transcending the distances of time and space, that lies between us and it? How shall we, indeed, cross the abyss separating the new world which is old from the old world which was young? Yet, as we read the songs or view the statues, records present with us of arts to whom the power of self-record belongs, some feeling may come to us of that other art of rhythmic movement, of whose continual abiding amongst them poet and song-maker render us constantly, if indefinitely, aware: some vague perception may steal into our minds of the third harmony in the great triumvirate—the trinity of song, melody, and motion—whose rule was honoured in the land. What was the air when filled with the 'sounds of the stirring to and fro of the dances of maidens'? What were the rhythmical foot-beats to which night by night old Pindar listened as before his door the girls moved in dance and song, honouring the mother of the gods and Pan, the well-beloved of the poet, in the temple he himself had reared for their worship? To multiply such quotations would be but a senseless repetition, yet it is by the very frequency of such chance allusions that we, reading, gain for ourselves a faint impression of that rippling cadence of the dancers' light foot-steps, as it drifted by and passed or paused, which must have been as familiar to the hearing of the Greek as to the ear of the city-dwellers of to-day are the noise of the tread of wearied and busied men upon the stone pavements, the roar of the vast city thoroughfares, and the jarring cries of the city streets. What the contrast must have been to that sense of hearing alone one can only dimly speculate. In those days, surely, half the dread of sleepless hours must have been taken from the night, and that worst of maladies, insomnia, must have been robbed of half its terrors. These are doubtless but misty impressions, gathered, as it were, from the side touches of the brush of unconscious painters; they are but shadowy images, of maidens' raiment that fluttered and limbs that moved, seen through the haze of all the countless sunsets that lie between us and them; yet possibly they bring home to us more the sense of what that pervasive beauty of movement may have been than all the efforts of writers who have endeavoured to portray it in

'vitiated by contact with Asiatic luxury,' and that 'the 'orgiastic cult of Dionysus and the voluptuous worship of 'the Corinthian Aphrodite,' with their attendant rites and festivals, among which dancing took its place, were intrusions from without, is not here the question under discussion. But this much is assured, that by inherent tendencies or by foreign contagion dancing suffered at the hands of the Greeks no less than at the hands of other nations, both in secular games and religious observances, its own indignities and degradations, and that the most fair-seeming ceremonies were not without their increeping element of moral declension.

If it is too sweeping an assertion to make the Orientals wholly responsible for the invention and introduction into Europe of the species of dancing associated with Eastern custom, it is undeniable that it is in the East, and by races of Eastern blood or Eastern proclivities, that this form of the art is brought to its highest point of good or of evil. It is the school before defined, in which movement is used, realistically or symbolically, as the medium for expressing and exciting emotion or sensation, and it is a task of extreme difficulty to arrive at a just understanding of the position and nature of this particular developement of an art of which such dissimilar accounts are given by conflicting testimonies and variously prejudiced witnesses. Disparities of impression are on all subjects inevitable; how pre-eminently fallacious the impressions of the uninterpreted aims and objects of an unfamiliar art are likely to be, one is able to guess. There is a curious instance illustrating such divergencies of opinion in the descriptions of the celebrated red tiger dance of the Lamās, by Mr. Frank Knight, in his book of travels, 'Where Three Empires meet,' and by Mr. Austine Waddell, the author of 'Buddhism in Thibet.' The former concludes his account of the religious ceremonial—the dance is part of it—with the following sentence: 'Thus, with a blasphemous caricature of all these people are 'supposed to hold sacred, the festival ended.' Mr. Waddell, a scholar, views the same spectacle from another standpoint. 'The performance,' he tells us, 'concludes with the appearance of the Chinese priest, attended by boys. They go 'through a form of worship of the images, *but being unorthodox it is ridiculed by the spectators.*' In fact, what seemed 'blasphemy' to the one appeared to the other only an excess of ecclesiastical orthodoxy. Such discrepancies may reasonably incline one to think twice before committing

oneself blindly to the guidance even of eye-witnesses, when their evidence concerns the religious rites or social customs of races whose rites and customs are alien to the experience, if not antagonistic to the sympathies, of Western convention. To accept without hesitation the crude statement that a great national art—as such undoubtedly one must regard dancing, both theatrical and domestic, in the East—is, broadly speaking, degraded and immoral in the practice of the *bayadères* and nautch girls would be obviously irrational. Mountstuart Elphinstone, whose integrity is beyond dispute, writing of the Hindus, has made the candid assertion that in comparing their purity of manners with those of his own nation, ‘the superiority is left on the side least ‘flattering to our self-esteem,’ and he proceeds to explain the apparent inconsistency of this opinion with other facts adduced, by adding that the Hindu possesses ‘that simplicity that conceives that what can exist without blame ‘may be named without offence,’ a statement of whose fairness the perusal of such a Hindu drama as the famous ‘Toy Cart’ convinces one, though, as the editor of the English translation observes, ‘the tenderness and devotion ‘of Vasantasēna [the courtesan heroine] seem little compatible with her life, the piety and gravity of Chārudatta ‘[the Brahmin hero] still less so with his love.’ Without, however, dwelling upon a sentence in which much of the modern controversy regarding the subjects admissible in art is summed up, it may well be that it affords the clue to many moral misjudgements. Nor is a passage quoted by the same authority less enlightening. ‘The native ‘singers and players, whom Europeans are in the way of ‘hearing in most parts of India, are regarded by their ‘scientific brethren as a ballad-singer at a street corner ‘would be by the primo soprano of the Italian Opera.’ It is unnecessary to say that verdicts given upon such limited experiences are not suited for general application.

On the other hand, to proceed to a different part of the subject, it is not credible that the slow dance-movements the Hindus of all classes contemplate with delight for hours, are the dull and monotonous performances some European on-lookers would have us believe. Here again we are disposed to inquire if the witness was in the position, or possessed the capacity, to form a correct estimate of the qualities and nature of the art criticised; for, whatever may be the custom of Western and Northern nationalities, to whom painting, poetry, music, and the drama proper have served

as the natural art-mediums for the expression of feelings and ideas, the East and the South have apparently recognised in dancing another and an equally definite vehicle for such expression. In movements and gestures and postures they have formulated and established an alphabet and grammar of sensation and thought. We have only to reflect upon the extraordinary extent to which the Buddhist system of symbolism has been carried, in the mystic attitudes of the body, in the locking or unlocking of the feet, in the lifting of arms and hands, and in the very curves of the fingers, to find some clue to a probable counterpart, an analogous system of symbolism, to be observed in the actions of dancing. On this supposition the sequence and shades of the dancer's movements must be as unintelligible to the uninitiated eye as would be the progression of the several parts of an intricate fugue to the musically untrained ear.

This hypothesis is corroborated by the information supplied by the courtesy of M. Grosset regarding the contents of the Indian text-book on dancing, the *Bhāratiya-Mātya-cāstra*, where it deals with 'la mimique concourant avec les paroles ou le chant à traduire par la "*gesticulation*" les différentes situations dramatiques.' Here we have indicated the same elaboration and precision in the symbolism of the body.

'On y voit qu'il y a 32 *angabūras* [comportments] reposant sur 103 *karanas* [acts] ou combinaisons de mouvements des pieds, des mains et autres parties du corps. Les diverses positions combinées des mains (qui ont dans cette mimique un rôle essentiel) reçoivent tel ou tel nom, suivant qu'elles sont *samyuta* [*joint*] ou *a-samyuta* [*disjoint*], qu'elles concourent toutes les deux ou isolément à la manifestation de l'idée, du sentiment, qu'il s'agit d'exprimer. Nous savons également dans quelles circonstances ces *figures* sont de mise. Il est question, dans le même *adhyāya*, des diverses postures de la main, usitées pour la danse en elle-même: elles sont nommées et définies. . . . Il n'y a pas moins de dix chapitres consacrés à l'exposé des règles de cette mimique ou manifestation dramatique par le geste, l'attitude, etc., des sentiments et des idées.'

From this we may easily conceive that while dancing of the highest order would seek to effect its aims by due observance of the idealistic or symbolic code, the dancers of the class corresponding to English street singers would be likely to appeal to their audience by a coarser and more realistic representation of the passions and sensations—the song-accompaniments deal mostly, Mrs. Grove states, with the vicissitudes of love—it should be their office, by the beauty

and perfection of their art, to transfigure and idealise. Was it likewise, if we may hazard the conjecture, by some such process of gradual descent from symbolism to realism that the art of older Egypt also suffered degradation? From ancient days, we are told, the Egyptian dancers bore the title of 'the women who are wise.' By what steps of slow decline has that wisdom forfeited its honour in the fantasias of the hired ghāwāzees of to-day? Yet even in these how true it is that people find only what they are looking for! How vividly the description given of such dancers by Lady Duff Gordon, clear-brained, clean-hearted, and open-eyed, contrasts with what other writers have found to say! 'I could not call it voluptuous any more than Racine's "Phèdre;" it is "Vénus tout entière à sa proie attachée," and to me seemed tragic. It is far more realistic than the fandango, and far less coquettish, because the thing represented is *au grand sérieux*, not travestied, *gagé*, or played 'with.' Surely in Lady Duff Gordon's impression we may trace some relic of the 'wisdom' of the elder Egypt's art.

Truly, as we look back, dancing comes before us as a player with many divers masks, tragic and comic. It assumes the alternate features of malady and remedy, of good and evil, of mirth and mourning, of wisdom and folly; it carries in its hand at once a garland and a sword. It has associated itself with every conceivable aspect of life, with funerals and marriages and births; its memories are interlinked with every imaginable image, with the rites of the profoundest religious creeds and the sacrileges of the most extreme profanity. The ancient world found no better semblance for death than the skeleton figures which dance upon the sarcophagus. In such dancing guise death was perpetually exhibited to mediæval Europe in those 'curious pageants of 'mortality,' as Douce calls them, engraved in the *danse macabre*, frescoed on church walls, and serving for the decoration of bridges, found appropriately on the steel of the dagger's sheath in the Middle Ages and upon the fragile surface of the nineteenth-century fan. There is no epoch in time and no locality in space where, if we search long enough, we are not confronted with some image, rudimentary and savage, or elaborate and civilised, as the case may be, of this all-pervading art of movement. If Western faiths have discarded this adjunct of past forms of worship, the world and its market-place have adopted religion's outcast art. And if the monotonous repetition of one isolated form has

become the etiquette of the modern ball-room, recalling the nursery refrain—

‘ Ainsi font, font, font les Marionnettes !
Ainsi font, font, font les Marionnettes ! ’—

the stage and the street still retain vestiges of older traditions. The solemn rhapsody of motion, once anointed to the service of the gods by priest and vestal, may be spring after spring found burlesqued almost beyond recognition in the coarse ribaldry of a London May Day ; the mystic ecstasy in which the Eastern sought the manifestation of the ideal symbol of human nature’s deepest instinct, the love of woman and man, may be supposed to find its modern reflection in the poses of a Spanish ballet-girl.

May not such a panorama serve almost for an epitome of life’s most paradoxical juxtapositions ? May not one ask if it has been the fate of any other art to suffer such antagonistic variations of custom or to undergo so many metamorphoses in the annals of time ?

It is not a matter of surprise that an English treatise on dancing should take its place in a series such as that of the ‘ Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes,’ for there is no doubt that it is as a social ‘ pastime ’ that the art of the Greek—the rhythmic perfection of form in movement, and the art of the East—the rhythmic, symbolic, or realistic expression of thought and sensation in posture and action—has taken root in modern England. Little trace, indeed, of the broader and deeper relationships to life, which in other countries and at other periods it has possessed, is now manifest ; the mystery and the glamour are gone ; it has become a social plebeian among the fellow arts of music and poetry, whose blood-royalty it once shared. This fact has made Mrs. Grove’s task one of singular difficulty. Considering as a whole the manner in which she has laboriously carried out her enterprise, our ungracious complaint would be that she has tried to do too much. Conscious that to treat dancing as a mere ‘ pastime ’ was to deal but with a somewhat insignificant fraction of the subject before her, she has attempted, with the help of her coadjutors, to produce a work which should serve not only, as do the other volumes of the ‘ Badminton Library,’ as a practical and technical manual of a common pursuit, but likewise as a detailed and elaborate historical and geographical art handbook, and to carry out such a scheme efficiently would require not one but many volumes. It is a matter

of regret that no such work seems yet to have found its way into English art literature ; its absence is a significant testimony to the exotic character, anti-national and anti-racial, that dancing as an art seems to bear in Saxon lands of to-day. Mrs. Grove, in doing her utmost to fill the breach, has perhaps overstrained her limits, and, while acknowledging to the full the zeal with which she has multiplied facts, we are disposed to wish she had restricted the area of her inquiries and dealt more at length with fewer geographical and chronological phases of a subject covering so extensive a field of research. Small slips, such as the reference to 'Tollet's picture,' by which is meant the Betley window ; the attribution of the words (occurring in the 'Grand Sultana' of Lope de Vega)—

' . . . There ne'er was born a Spanish woman yet
But she was born to dance '—

to Cervantes, and other small errors of a similar kind would have been obviated by a more leisurely revision, and it is no ill compliment to an author to desire that a book, written evidently with conscientious zeal, should not here and there be wanting in the more prosaic quality of conscientious precision.

ART. IV.—1. *Reports of Congested Districts Board, Ireland, 1894-5.*

2. *Facts from Gweedore.* Compiled from notes made at various times by the late Lord GEORGE HILL. Fifth Edition. London: 1887.

WHEREVER the Romans extended their sway, from Somerset to Parthia, or from Scotland to Carthage, they drove great roads straight through the country from city to city. Along these roads towns sprang up, and the wealth of the conquered increased under peaceful rule, even although manufactures and mines were alike unknown. The Roman road is the silent witness to civilised rule; but in Ireland it is unknown, and the history of a continual driving of weaker populations, by new-comers from the East, into the bogs and barren mountains of the West, is marked by the line of border castles which, from the time of Strongbow, divided the good lands from the bad.

It is, fortunately, no longer a question of party opinion whether it be the duty of the richer and more powerful island to help and educate her sister of the West for the common good of Great Britain. A policy which is mainly due to Mr. Arthur Balfour has been accepted by both parties in Parliament, and is clearly intended to prevail under the present Government. It is not a policy of pauperisation or of bribery, whatever be the opinion of political agitators, but one of just and energetic administration for the good of Ireland, without reference to race or creed, without expectation of popular gratitude, and without fear of misrepresentation or interested clamour. The only question which arises is how best the country may be developed, and in what manner public money may be so spent as to be really useful in giving permanent results. Irishmen who have seen the wealth of our great manufacturing cities, in the North of England and in Scotland, ask why there are no factories, no mines, and no coalfields in Ireland. The more ignorant are convinced that it is due to a selfish Saxon policy, and never pause to ask whether nature has provided coalfields or metals; nor will they allow that the absence of possible manufactures may be due to want of persistent effort and of business habits among themselves. Yet, if Ireland is to be developed and enriched by administration, it is only by working on natural lines, and by developing existing possibilities. We must

consider the country itself, its population, and its products before we can feel sure what public works in Ireland should be, and in what manner they should be, carried out.

Only about a third of Ireland can be regarded as naturally poor—namely, the western shores and inland bogs in Donegal, parts of Sligo, Mayo, West Galway, Clare, Kerry, and West Cork. Poverty, no doubt, exists in other counties, but in those mentioned it is general and perennial. The character of the country itself accounts for its poverty. In Connemara, and in the Rosses of Donegal, the desolate moors and bogs cover the granite, and the mountains are formed of metamorphic limestone and sandstone. In Clare the wind-swept plateau, above the limestone cliffs, presents a treeless country with a poor soil all along the promontory which forms the right bank of the Shannon. In Kerry and Cork a carboniferous shale rises into rugged ridges of picturesque outline, and the slopes are wild moor and bog-land unfit for tillage. These formations are not rich in minerals—excepting a few copper mines—nor do they produce coal. For the most part they are suited only for summer grazing, and the higher ridges are without inhabitants. The contrast between these regions and the fine ploughlands and grass-fields of the Emerald Isle, as seen further east, is remarkable. The only products of the Far West which have any real value are peat, kelp from the seaweed, and the harvest of the sea.

It is well known that the fisheries of the west coast teem with mackerel and herring, with ling and cod, with lobsters and oysters. The Irish peasantry are often reproached with their neglect of their opportunities in this respect; for the hardier Manx and Arklow fishermen invade the south-west, and on the west the shore population is timorous, leaving the islanders to do such fishing as is attempted. But it must not be forgotten that the Atlantic waves beat on these coasts with full force, and, during the terrible winter storms, these mountainous breakers dash before them great rocks, sometimes strewn over the fields like shingle; while the fishers have neither experience nor capital to invest, beyond their ancestral use of the curragh or coracle, which carries us back to the times of Cæsar. The skill and valour with which they will fight the ocean in these keelless canoes, of hide or canvas, stretched on oak beams and willow framing, are remarkable, and may be mentioned later; but between Bantry Bay on the south, and Lough Swilly in Donegal on the north, the West of

Ireland possesses no natural harbour of the first class. The open bay at Galway, and the shallow roadstead at Blacksod Bay in Mayo, could only be made really useful by large works. Between these, in the north of Connemara, is the wonderful Killery fiord, running up between the mountains, but the entrance is difficult and blocked by a rock. With these exceptions, there is hardly any shelter for fishing-boats in stormy weather, when they are exposed to the full force of the open ocean. Small harbours for boats might be made on various parts of the coast, but very little public money has, so far, been expended on this improvement.

The population of this wild part of Ireland is not, as a whole, purely Celtic; nor does it live in complete ignorance of the outer world. In considering its character we must not forget that its habits are influenced by religion and by language. We must remember the effects of emigration and of annual migratory labour; and we must also bear in mind that the Irish peasant possesses an intelligence quite equal to that of the Scotchman or North Englishman, and abilities probably far greater than those of the Saxon peasantry on the south coast of England. The Irishman has good reasons not only for emigrating, but also for returning to his home, and probably a shrewder idea of his own interests than those who attempt to instruct him at all suspect.

Throughout Ireland the original Celtic stock—in all classes—is mingled with Teutonic elements of population. On the coasts and islands the Danish blood still marks a racial type, and in Kerry Spanish colonisation has left its mark. The pure Celt is probably only found in the most remote parts of Connemara. In Donegal the Scottish admixture has improved the race, which is however mainly Irish in the remote glens on the south-west of that county. In Ireland generally three-quarters of the population is Roman Catholic, the Protestants including 12 per cent. of the Church of Ireland, and 9 per cent. of Presbyterians. But in the poor counties Protestants are to be counted by tens, and the prejudices of the peasantry preclude any success of Protestant efforts to organise industries which they might direct. Wherever found the Protestants are more prosperous and enterprising than their Roman Catholic neighbours; and, speaking generally, this is the case—whatever be the reason—in all parts of Europe. The Irish priesthood look with distrust on every movement which tends to separate from themselves the more energetic and thriving members

of their flock. They dislike emigration, and the association of Catholics with those of any other creed. They control education, and although they allow the English language to be taught in National schools, English history is no part of the elementary course. The Irish language is fast dying out, although many children of the present generation are able to speak it as well as English. In parts where the population is still Irish-speaking, migratory labour is impossible for that reason; and these districts are in consequence the most congested and poorest. But in another generation or two the disabilities due to language will probably have disappeared for ever.

The returns of the recent census of 1891 are instructive as showing the comparative destitution in various parts of Ireland. In 1767 the population of Ireland was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and by 1801 it had increased to more than 5,000,000. It continued steadily so to increase after the Union till, in 1845, it had reached $8\frac{1}{4}$ millions. A sudden drop to $6\frac{1}{2}$ millions followed the famine years, and the decrease has gone on year by year until, in 1891, the total was only 4,700,000 souls. The average of emigration during the last ten years has been 62,000; but in 1883, in consequence probably of the disturbed state of Ireland, the number of emigrants (the large majority of whom go to America) rose to 105,700 souls. Even with the present reduced population we have an average of 148 souls per square mile. In England the average is 500 per square mile, but in Scotland it is 134 only. Great as is this disparity, Ireland is more fully populated than Scotland, because it contains less uninhabitable land; and we must not forget that the population of Turkey in Europe shows a density of only 70 souls per square mile, and that of Turkey in Asia only 25 per square mile. The question is how Ireland was ever able to support a population of 8,000,000; but it must be remembered that this occurred at a time when corn still commanded a high price, and when agricultural occupation could still be found where now the land is wholly laid down in grass. Ireland has suffered like England from this change, and, but for the outlet afforded by emigration, would now be twice as poor as it is.

It is remarkable, however, that while the poor lands amount in area to about a third of Ireland, the population in these districts also amounts to 30 per cent. of the whole, which is a result rendered all the more unsatisfactory because this poor population, according to the census returns, does not

diminish, but in some cases actually increases. The reason appears to be that, with the decrease of corn production and the establishment of grazing farms, the agriculturists have been gradually pushed out—or encouraged to retreat—to the western bog lands, where they have by great exertions won a scanty living from the reclaimed moor or swamp.

If we take as a criterion of prosperity the rateable value per head of population, of which two-thirds is agricultural, we find that Ulster, with its linen factories and other industries, stands first, Leinster second, Connaught third, and Munster last. In Munster the population is most congested, or, in other words, too thick for the character of agricultural land available. It is remarkable that in Ireland generally the percentage of poor relieved from the rates is only $2\frac{1}{4}$, as against $2\frac{1}{2}$ in Scotland, or in England and Wales; but the difference is probably due to the high proportion of emigrants. In Munster the proportion of the poor is greatest, and in Kerry the percentage of emigrants is highest, as will be seen from the following table:—

County	Acres per head	Valuation per head	Percentage of emigrants	Percentage of poor
		£		
Clare . . .	6	2·5	1·8	3·2
Cork . . .	4	2·8	1·9	3·7
Kerry . . .	4	1·7	2·3	2·8
Mayo . . .	6	1·4	1·6	1·2
Galway . . .	7	2·2	1·6	1·7
Donegal . . .	$6\frac{1}{2}$	1·5	0·9	0·7
Antrim . . .	$1\frac{1}{2}$	3 0	0·7	0·7
Dublin . . .	$0\frac{1}{2}$	3·6	0·3	2·3

In this table Antrim (including Belfast) and co. Dublin may be contrasted with the poorest counties, of which the first three are in Munster, the next two in Connaught, and one only (Donegal) in Ulster. Taking emigrants and poor together, we have 5 per cent. of population in Clare; and in Kerry, where the density of population is greater, 5·1 per cent. In Cork (with 5·6 per cent.) the poverty is to some extent town poverty. Mayo is relieved by migratory labour, though the valuation of the land is less than in Kerry. Galway includes East Galway, and, if Connemara alone were taken into account, would perhaps be the poorest of all the counties, and in parts the most congested. That emigration is

due to poverty seems clear, from the fact that in Antrim, where the valuation is 3*l.* per head, only 7 per thousand emigrate; whereas in Kerry, with a valuation of 1*l.* 14*s.*, the emigrants number 23 per thousand. The proportion of the poor relieved from the rates is in about the same ratio in these two cases.

The above comparison of the conditions in various counties also shows us that, in consequence of natural causes over which no government has had much control, population is now distributed in such a manner that the poor lands are more thickly peopled than they should be. The present administration of the Land Act tends in some measure to remedy this evil, and the growth of a class of yeomen proprietors is in some cases fostered. The evil of constant subdivision of the land needs, however, to be checked by very strict stipulations in all new properties. This has been enforced by land agents in the case of good lands, but in the poorer districts—such as that of Swinford in Mayo—it has either not been enforced or has been evaded. The old abuses whereby the landlord profited by the labour of the peasant driven out to reclaim the bogs have become impossible under the Act; but the ruin of landowners has left the peasant without any aid from capital; and the increase of rates, which fall more heavily than ever on the landlords, is now the main grievance of the occupiers also. In even the poorest parts of England private enterprise, and the wealth of landlords, still aid the peasant. In Ireland he has no such resource, and private enterprise is paralysed by religious prejudices and by suspicion. Without the aid of the State these regions, where destitution is the normal condition, must continue to grow poorer and more congested, becoming finally a source of danger as well as of public scandal.

Among independent and more fortunate populations, in England and Scotland, the Irish are regarded as a lazy race, content to live on alms, and notoriously drunken. But such an estimate, though perhaps once not unjust, has ceased to be true of the struggling population of the West of Ireland. The help given to them has been small and occasional. The danger of starvation has forced them to help themselves; and drink in Ireland is not as great an evil as in Scotland or in the North of England. The first resource was emigration; and the money constantly sent home from America, by sons and daughters, keeps perhaps half of the poor out of the workhouse. But the Irishman has no great desire

to emigrate if he can find work at home. His affection for his native land is such that he returns to it as soon as he can. The emigrant, in a large proportion of cases, comes back from time to time, and often finally buys land and settles down in Ireland, bringing with him new ideas learned in America, which, since the famine, have gradually changed the whole relation of classes to each other, and have done much to undermine the power of the priests. In parts of Mayo (Achill Island especially) the whole able-bodied population departs annually for the harvest to the lowlands of Scotland and to the North of England. Their labour is cheap; and since they return year by year to the same employers, it is presumably found satisfactory. In such districts the men work hard to put in the potatoes in spring. They earn fair wages in summer, and in winter they rest in their own homes, where the family has lived meanwhile in comfort. A small sum provides them with good fuel from the bog; the winter is less severe than in Scotland, and the cost of living much lower. The change of scene and of occupation is also agreeable to the Irishman, whose greatest fault is want of steady persistence. In Donegal this migratory labour is yet more serviceable, as the Donegal men work in factories, and earn high wages in Scotland. The people of the West Donegal coast will send their children to farm service in the better lands of the Lagan round Letterkenny, as the Cavan people send theirs to till the fields of Leitrim. It cannot justly be said that these peasants do nothing to help themselves. The poorest parts of Ireland, in Connemara, in the Maamtrasna district of South Mayo, and in South-west Donegal, are glens and coasts where the people are purely Irish-speaking, and have neither emigration nor migratory labour as a resource.

It must again be remembered that Ireland has made steady progress during the past half-century in material prosperity and civilisation, however far she may have been distanced by England and Scotland. The account published by Lord George Hill of the good work done by him at Gweedore, in Donegal, presents to us a picture applicable to other poor parts of Ireland, which have struggled more slowly and with less generous aid towards civilisation. In 1838 there were 9,000 persons in the Gweedore parish, who had among them one cart, one plough, twenty shovels, six cow houses, three turkeys, twenty-seven geese, no pigs, no fruit trees, no vegetables, except potatoes and cabbages. They had one school and one priest; the people slept naked,

and had very few boots or shoes. The cattle and sheep were then dying of hunger or killed to feed the starving people. The peasants paid hardly any rent, and were eight to twenty years in arrear. They were divided into 'tribes,' which held pasturage in common, and by the system of 'Rundale' a man might be allotted his proportion of the townland in thirty or forty places, according to the quality of the soil, each villager, according to the primeval village tenure, taking his share of good and bad. Even horses and cows were held between joint owners. A family lived on potatoes, clothed itself from its few sheep, and paid three to thirty shillings to the landlord by the sale of a little corn. The land was constantly subdivided, until half an acre was in one case held by twenty-six people. Law was unknown, and the strong bullied the weak. Potteen was made to such an extent that grain had to be brought from Sligo and Mayo for the illicit distillation. The condition of Gweedore was that of the prehistoric ages, and inferior in civilisation to that of Kaffirs or any Oriental peasantry in our own times. Yet it was not worse than that of other poor districts in Ireland.

The natives were, however, fearless boatmen, and even brought cattle from the islands in their coracles. It is recorded that Paddy M'Bride, sole lord of the small island of Dovey between Tory Island and the coast, conquered by main force a bull which broke loose in his coracle; and in another instance a man actually recovered a horse which fell out of the coracle into the sea. Those who have seen, or taken passage in, one of these canoes will understand the extraordinary nature of such adventures.

In 1839 Lord George Hill built a corn store, and caused carts and barrows to be made for the peasants. A general village store followed, and prospered. With much difficulty the system of 'Rundale' was suppressed in favour of definite holdings, and 20,000 acres were so distributed. Fences were built; prizes were offered for improvements in agriculture, and for neat cabins and better stock. New ground was reclaimed, and bore good crops of oats and potatoes. The knitting of stockings, the weaving of cloth and flannel, occupied profitably the women of the family, and by 1843 the advance made was equal to that of centuries. In 1866 roads and bridges had come into existence, the carts numbered thirty-four, and two ploughs were used (although the population had decreased), there were three post-offices in the district, and a daily mail. A model farm and an hotel had

been built, and a quay and landing-place at Bunbeg for vessels of 150 tons. The arrears of rent had fallen from 1,000*l.* to 40*l.*, and the tenants owned 1,700 cattle, 4,000 sheep, and 300 horses. At the present time, in spite of the poverty of the soil and the remote situation of Gweedore, the people are far more prosperous than they are in Connemara. The struggle with prejudice and suspicion was severe at first, and the relations of tenant and landlord were rendered difficult about 1882 by the schemes of hired agitators and the false statements of interested persons; but the work done remains as an example of what is possible for the bettering of the condition of a population living even on the most barren and uninviting spots.

The progress of such districts is, however, impeded by the occasional failure of the potato. It is often said that the potato is a curse to Ireland. Certainly, as regards nutriment, analysis shows that it is only less inferior than cabbage; but the potato will grow where no other crop—even oats—can be cultivated, and consequently a population condemned to live in the bogs is forced to depend on the potato. Whenever they are able the peasantry sow oats, and in some cases use oatmeal. They purchase flour in the towns, and depend less on the potato than used to be the case. It is, however, still the staple food not only of the peasant, but of his stock as well. The failure of the crop thus threatens immediate ruin and famine, only averted by the prompt intervention of Government. A system of relief of this kind tends to demoralise the peasantry, and to discourage their efforts to help themselves. The arrangements made for the distribution of such grants were also in the past open to criticism, since they led to jobbery and waste, the money being in great measure diverted from the poorest class into the pockets of the well-to-do, while no permanent results, in the shape of public works useful to all, could be discovered. But by the abolition of the contract system, and by special arrangements, these scandals have now been abolished by Government, and any money now spent in the relief of distress is so managed that it goes straight to the pockets of the poorest, and results in the permanent improvement of the district, by the making of roads, bridges, small jetties, and other useful works. Even with this improvement in system it is clearly unsatisfactory that Government aid should be spasmodic, and applied only when the evil is apparent. A system of prevention is much to be preferred to one of

temporary aid, which is liable to upset the gradual progress of the country towards better conditions.

The work of the Congested Districts Board represents the first serious attempt to grapple with this difficulty by a general and constant action for improvement of existing means of livelihood. But the sum which they can command (about 45,000*l.* a year) is small; the department is isolated and new to its work, the districts in which it acts are not co-extensive with the whole poverty of Ireland, and the subjects treated are numerous and diverse. But, in spite of misrepresentation and inexperience, the Board has done some years of excellent work; yet it is to be regarded as a germ only of a permanent department, which should be organised more powerfully, and allowed to extend its operations further afield. The work of the Board includes improvements in agriculture, in stock, in fisheries, in forestry, and public works, such as new roads and bridges. Its operations extend over the greater part of the poor regions in the West of Ireland. A few words may be devoted to each of these departments of the administration which Ireland owes to Mr. A. Balfour.

As regards agriculture the most important discovery has been that of 'Strawsonite' for spraying the potato. Experiments are said to have shown that this mixture of sulphate of copper and lime, pumped on to the plants twice in the season in a very fine spray, not only protects the potato from disease, but also increases the yield by about a third. The new system is already beginning to find favour with the people; and, should experience prove that it really protects the plants from disease, the danger of periodical famines will disappear, and spasmodic votes for relief of distress will no longer be required from Parliament. Regarding improvements in stock, which were sadly needed, the Board have already been successful with horses and sheep, and are arranging for the improvement of breed in cows and pigs and poultry. No greater boon can be bestowed on the peasantry than increased price for stock in the market. The work done in aid of the fisheries also begins to tell, especially in the curing of ling and cod, which can be seen at Teelin, near Carrick, in Donegal. Not only are the fishermen sure of a fair price at the pier-head, but their families are fully employed at home in curing the fish, and the quality of dried salt-fish so obtained is excellent, and has already become a source of profit to the Board. The habits of industry, order, and cleanliness which have thus been

taught to the fisherfolk in Donegal, in the Arran Islands, and elsewhere are also of the greatest value for the improvement of the people. The attempts made at forestry have so far led to doubtful results; and, if Ireland were extensively reforested, the probable result would be an increase in the rainfall which is hardly desirable. As regards public works, the action of the Board has been restricted by want of funds, and those carried out have for the most part been small and unambitious (except in Donegal); the development of the Light Railway system forms no part of the work of the Congested Districts Board.

We have thus glanced at the natural conditions, at the progress made, and at the causes of failure in the past; and it remains to describe how, in the future, the interests of the poor in Ireland may be best furthered. Nothing has been said so far of existing industries, because these are of a microscopic nature. When we are considering the affairs of a million and a half of people, it is futile to point to a stocking factory which can employ 150 hands, such as Mayo boasts at Foxford (which is not a poor place), or to the lace-making in Sligo, and basket-making in Connemara, which employ only a few boys and girls. It is probable that the wool industry of Donegal might be much improved and extended; and it would seem natural that, in a country, where agricultural wages rarely exceed eighteenpence a day, manufacturers would find it profitable to establish themselves. Yet, with the exception of the linen trade in Ulster, such manufactures are conspicuous by their absence in Ireland. Attempts to start creameries, and similar undertakings, have failed, because the work done was so slovenly as to command only a very low price in the market. Until the Irish people learn the necessity of steady perseverance, careful work, cleanliness, and strict honesty in their dealings with the public, all attempts at the encouragement of manufactures will fail, as they have failed in the past, and capital will find better fields for its employment elsewhere.

We turn, therefore, to the consideration of public works carried out by Government, such as the making of light railways, of roads, bridges, piers and harbours, the drainage of rivers and of bogs, the encouragement of the fisheries and of the kelp manufacture, and the improvement in housing of the poor. There is a prejudice among many against public works in Ireland, which arises from causes already mentioned—from the scandals of the contract system, from the errors of the Board of Works, and from the expensive nature

of the supervision in other cases. But in these attempts the Irish Government learned by experience, and their most recent undertakings have shown that public works are among the most important means of permanently improving Ireland.

Among public works in the Far West the construction of light railways ranks first. These railways, 236 miles in total length, have now been carried into Connemara and South Mayo, where they are of the ordinary gauges, while in Donegal they are strictly light, with a narrow roadway. By this means the towns of Clifden, near the west shore of Connemara, and of Bullinrobe, east of Loch Mask; the Island of Achill, whence so many migratory labourers go yearly to Scotland, and which is connected with the mainland by a bridge; the town of Swinford, in the middle of a very poor district, and the towns of Killybegs and Glenties, in West Donegal, have been joined to the main railway system of Ireland. To complete the scheme a line running north through Connemara, and a line to Blacksod Bay near Belmullet, in the north-west corner of Mayo, are required, and a coast line to Dunfanaghy, in Donegal. In West Cork and Kerry lines have been extended to Bantry Bay and to the vicinity of Valentia; and a line to Berehaven is also needed. By this scheme the whole of the West is placed in touch with the richer part of Ireland, and a great boon has been conferred on the poor and isolated populations of the coasts. These lines have not been undertaken by the existing railway companies to which they are handed over; but this cannot be said of enterprise, for at present they are undertakings which no company could have undertaken. If, however, railways in Ireland prove, as elsewhere, to promote the growth of towns, and to draw the rural population to such centres, the new lines must pay in time, and will aid in drawing the congested population out of the poorer lands. Bantry Bay is one of the finest harbours in the United Kingdom, with six miles of smooth water seven fathoms deep, and with good anchorage protected from storms by Bere Island; the rocks sink sheer into the water, and not only do large war fleets here lie safely at anchor, but the largest merchant ships could moor alongside a wharf, and deliver merchandise and mails without transhipment. It is calculated that more than an hour might be saved in the time of delivery of the American mail if it were landed at Berehaven, and if a railway were made to a pier near Castle-town Bere. It has also been proposed to make Blacksod

Bay a terminus for the Canadian liners, shortening the sea passage and distance to London. In this case, however, it would be more difficult to find the site for a pier which the liners could reach without the use of a tender. Even if these projects were found unattainable, the developement of such harbours by railway communication remains desirable, and trade with America and Canada would thereby probably be increased.

Roads are almost as necessary to the West of Ireland as railways. Remote populations, shut in at the head of mountain glens, sometimes with a flooded stream to cross before the market road can be reached, and without even a track to the village, are still to be found in Connemara. In Mayo the poverty is so general that the county cess is not paid, and even the existing roads fall into ruin. In such cases the peasants are unable to keep market carts, and can only with difficulty bring stock or other produce to market. In some places children are obliged to wade through streams or cross quaking bogs on the way to school, and some are reported to have been drowned in winter, through the absence of paths and foot-bridges. Funerals cannot be conducted with the decency desired by the peasantry, in cases where the graveyard has no road; and access to the chapels is in winter very difficult. Much has been done during the last five years to improve such communication, but much remains still to be done. Access to local markets is one of the great desiderata for an agricultural population.

The Irish peasants of the West are sturdy walkers, and think little of going twenty miles on foot to market, sometimes even returning on the same day to their homes. But in cases where long creeks run inland the market road is carried round them, because no money is available for building bridges. Such bridges could be constructed at small cost, and these would also be very important works. A more ambitious project would be the bridging of the narrow head of Lough Corrib, which would bring the agricultural district in North Connemara into direct communication with the richer parts of East Galway, near Tuam. At present such produce must be carried by a long *détour* or transported in boats. The erection of small foot-bridges is desirable in all parts of the country, especially in the interests of the education of children. By recent regulation all schools must stand on a high road, but the scholars often come from hamlets reached by pathless miles across the bogs.

The construction of such roads and bridges would be very

cheap, as compared with similar work in England, because the rate of wages is low, and the roads need only be made for light traffic. Where they traverse the bogs they must of necessity be so made as to form a hard skin on the shaking surface. Tons of stone may be poured into such swamps without producing a hard surface; but proper bog roads are made by first driving heavy side drains in the required direction, and then carrying a light roadway of metal and gravel, as in the fen roads, on a wider platform of hurdles, matted heather, or turf. If this platform is carefully made it is durable and efficient, and the peasantry, through long experience, have attained to considerable skill in such road-making. Materials for roads and for the piers of bridges are, as a rule, found on the spot, and can be obtained at small cost. The bridge superstructure now commonly used consists of steel joists covered with a flooring of corrugated iron, of stone slabs, or of planks, as may be found most suitable. The choice of all such works requires to be carefully watched, for in the earlier attempts to improve the country useless roads—which led too often to the houses of single individuals—were no doubt made, and, being of no general public service, were allowed by the county authorities to fall into ruins, leaving no trace of their existence at the present day; but it ought not to be difficult to determine what works are really needed for the general benefit, and such communications would no doubt be kept up by the county.

Under the heading of harbours might be considered works ranging from important harbours for foreign trade down to small boat slips and piers for fisher-boats. It is remarkable that in so fine a position as that found at Berehaven no pier or harbour exists. It is no doubt very remote from London, but it is for that reason all the nearer to America. It is on the borders of Kerry, whence the largest number of emigrants now leave Ireland annually, and it is within sight of the ordinary course of the great American liners. The vested interests of Queenstown have no doubt to be remembered, but it is hardly possible to suppose that so fine a natural terminus is destined always to remain neglected. Railway access presents some difficulty; but a single tunnel and deep cutting for a few miles seem alone to be required to communicate with the main line to Dublin. Galway Harbour, Blacksod Bay, and Clew Bay, all urge their claims to consideration; but in these cases the works required would be more expensive, and the natural advantages are less. For the developement of the fisheries small ports are

much needed, and these could often be easily made by blasting the reefs which keep the boats from the shore, and by constructing jetties. It cannot be doubted that if such places of refuge existed near the shore villages, boats would become more numerous, and the damage done by the winter storms would be lessened. Such works would be specially useful where curing stations were established. Large quantities of Irish salted mackerel are consumed in America, and this produce competes easily with the Canadian mackerel. Herring, ling, and cod are also fish which can command a large market if carefully cured, and the work already done in that direction has been noticed above. In all cases it is necessary that good communications should be formed between such landing-places and the main roads of the country, but this has not yet been carried out in some instances, and the boats are only reached by crossing fields or bogs.

The kelp industry is, on some parts of the coast, the only resource of the small tenants. The seaweed is carried on shore in great quantities after heavy storms, but that suitable for kelp must be dredged from below the low-tide level. The price is subject to great variations, and the purchase is in the hands of a few contractors. The kelp is chiefly useful for the extraction of iodine, and the method of preparing it is probably rude, and capable of improvement. The price is often lowered by admixture of unsuitable weed gathered on shore, and in the attempt to save himself trouble by such petty fraud the peasant often ruins his own industry. The manufacture and distribution to buying centres of the kelp would seem to be a matter in which Government assistance might legitimately be given.

The question of drainage embraces two separate subjects—that of arterial drainage and the control of rivers and streams, and that of drainage for the improvement of bogs and for the reclamation of bog lands. Government aid is evidently needed in the former case, especially because legal questions must arise if certain areas are independently treated by owners without reference to the results in other properties. The whole of a river basin requires to be considered as one question, in order that improvements in some parts may not lead to damage in others. Some rivers—like the Shannon, for instance—appear to be much neglected, and good land might be reclaimed by drainage along their courses. In other parts the smaller streams are choked with silt and weeds, or the course impeded by the old-fashioned gullet-bridges, which dam up the flood-waters

and swamp the fields in the upper course. The removal of such bridges might, however, damage the lands near the lower part of the stream, and endless litigation would ensue between the owners unless the question were treated as a whole by an independent authority armed with the necessary powers. In other instances an owner who has drained and reclaimed the hill slopes near the watershed has unintentionally damaged the lower lands by the rapid filling of a channel too small to carry off the water. Small tenants have not the capital necessary for improving such streams, and land which now lies waste might be reclaimed at a reasonable cost by a carefully devised system of drainage, to the benefit of both landlord and tenant.

The great peat bogs form the characteristic feature of scenery in the West of Ireland. In Mayo a mighty bog stretches almost without a break for forty miles north and south, and thirty miles east and west—a wild, treeless expanse, with small hamlets dotted at long distances apart on the low ridges rising above the general level of the plateau. A similar bog occupies a long stretch of thirty miles inland of the north shores of Galway Bay. In Donegal the Rosses present an open moor, with granite subsoil, and Clare is almost the only county without peat in this region. The bogs are of very different values, ranging from rich deep black peat to a mere surface turf. Some of these, which have been carefully managed, cut systematically, and drained where necessary, are very valuable. In other parts a rough spongy mass of undrained turf covers a gravel subsoil at no great depth. In yet other cases what are called bogs are little better than miry swamps among the granite boulders. The bogs are probably of very different ages, but in most cases they represent the remains of former forests of pine, juniper, oak, and other trees. The bog wood preserved beneath the surface is not fossilised, and is not only available for burning, but often sound enough for making small bridges. Bogs in which skeletons of the Irish elk and early Irish ring money are found have no doubt existed for many ages, but in Mayo there is reason to suppose that even as late as the sixteenth century woods existed on the surface where no trees can now be found. In some cases successive layers of tree stumps mark the succession of more than one forest age. It is remarkable that the trees, as a rule, are all broken off at about the same levels, and various explanations have been given. It is thought that the forests were burned down either by con-

flagration or by disforested for firewood. In other instances the marks of iron tools are said to be traceable. Some suppose the trees to have rotted near the roots in consequence of the swampy nature of the soil. Whatever be the reasons, it is apparent that the bogs have been formed by the decay of forests, by the growth of grasses in the swamps, and by slow consolidation of the matted and heavy surface soil. When deep drains are driven through the more spongy bog the surface sinks, often three or four feet, and remains dry and fit for cultivation. Considerable areas near villages have been so reclaimed, but require constant attention. The drains are soon filled in by the wet soil pushed outwards from the dry surface, and they become choked with weeds and grass. The bog in time reverts to its original condition if neglected. In land which has been cut out, leaving only a shallow layer of rotten turf above the subsoil, good crops can be grown; but the custom of burning the ground instead of using manure gradually deteriorates the cold wet lands, in which potatoes only can be grown; and the potato seems in these cases specially liable to disease. It is possible that a source of considerable wealth is to be recognised in the better bog lands, which has been little utilised, especially if recent attempts to consolidate the turf as artificial fuel should prove commercially successful. At present the peat is cut into long bricks, skilfully thrown by use of a narrow spade on to the surface above the vertical bank, and is left to dry before packing into stacks; or, in other cases—as, for instance, near Westport—the more swampy peat is pressed into lumps by hand and spread on the surface. The drainage of bogs is thus a question requiring much consideration, and depends on the local requirements and on the nature of the peat. Where this has little value, and a sufficient slope can be found, drainage would convert waste land into agricultural or grazing ground. The worst class of swamp is perhaps incapable of treatment, except at great expense in cutting channels through hard rock. In such districts the migration of the population to better lands appears to be the only real remedy for destitution.

The question of housing the poor is also one of great importance in Ireland, including the administration of the law in the case of labourers' cottages. In nearly every poor part of Ireland the cottage consists of one small bedroom and a larger outer room which is the kitchen and the stable as well. The cow, the pig, and sometimes the donkey, are

housed in the same room in which the family lives and the children sleep. The peasants are so accustomed to this arrangement that it is almost impossible to induce them to keep their animals in separate sheds. The inevitable result is typhus fever, which, although no longer the scourge which it was half a century ago, still breaks out at times, especially in winter and in years of privation. The people say that they have no money to build sheds, and sanitary regulations are not enforced as strictly as they ought to be. Were it not for the healthy air and purifying winds, the mortality from this cause would be heavy. The regulation of such habitations is a serious question which should not be forgotten in any general scheme. In various parts of the country there are signs of activity in enforcing the law as to labourers' cottages, which can be built, when the farmer refuses to improve the labourers' cabins in accordance with Government requirements. Such cottages, let at a reasonable rent, are a great boon to the poorest class, which is liable to be held in bondage by a grasping farmer under the old system which ties the peasant to the service of one master. The example set by building cottages on modern principles should also have its influence on the more backward and prejudiced among the poor.

The account thus given of actual conditions and possible improvements may tend to show that the Irish peasant is not as lazy or as ignorant as Englishmen have sometimes been inclined to think. Although the inhabitants of Bere Island allow their fisheries to be worked by Manxmen and Frenchmen from a distance, the same islanders will sometimes send twenty recruits to the navy in one year out of a population of a thousand souls. The Irishman goes where money is to be found. He has little capital to employ in developing home resources, and the village jealousies, which represent the old factions of 'tribes' and 'clans,' make co-operation at home by means of voluntary association very difficult. Attempts have been made to organise the workers who make flannel or knit socks at home, and to bring them to the market without the intervention of middlemen. Such attempts are often frustrated by the action of the shopkeeper class, whose interests are opposed, and to whom the peasantry, as in other poor countries, are heavily in debt. To this we must add other difficulties, due to the want of persistence which marks the Irish character, to the jealousies of religious origin, and to the lack of honesty and fair dealing which is unfortunately common, and which creates a general feeling

of suspicion among neighbours. But men who can never agree among themselves are quite content to be guided by some independent authority which has gained their confidence by just dealings; and although they may combine together against such authority when they fancy they can gain some advantage, such schemes can be frustrated by firmness and fair treatment, which will make the ruling authority respected when weakness is secretly ridiculed.

The task of any Government bent on improving the condition of the country is not by any means easy. Patience and persistence are needed, and much opposition, due to ignorance, prejudice, jealousy, and petty scheming, to the vested interests of the less destitute class and to the extravagant demands of those who think that they can obstruct unless they are paid off, will have to be encountered continually. Failures will discourage the workers, and success will lead to increasing demands for more help. But wise men who have set their hands to the plough must not turn back. The Government must do that which experience shows to be best, without too great indulgence shown to public opinion, and without expectation of gratitude from the people as a whole. It is a work to be steadily prosecuted year by year; but the results already obtained are of good augury for the future.

A few words on the political aspect of the question must be added, not because it really affects the subject very much, but because of English opinion, which attributes an undue influence to political ideas. The public of Great Britain have awakened from the delusion that Home Rule is needed for the contentment of the Irish people; but they suppose the Irish still to have at heart a change which is known not to be for their advantage, and still to desire separation from the richer country. Such ideas do, no doubt, exist among classes connected with professional politicians in Irish towns, but it is not too much to say that the Irish peasant not only does not long for Home Rule, but fears and distrusts the establishment of such a system. In his own heart he most desires to profit by the wealth, experience, and impartial conduct of the more prosperous populations of Great Britain. He will always ask for more than he expects to get, and will demand as a right what he should ask as a favour, if he considers that it may be most easily so obtained. But he has no desire to see the sources of wealth dried up, or to break with those from whom benefits may be obtained. He is acquainted with the progress of England, Scotland,

and America, and he knows well that the money can only come from Great Britain. Separation means the ruin of Ireland, and the fact is as shrewdly appreciated by the peasantry of the West of Ireland as it is by the middle class in England.

The peasantry trusted Mr. Parnell. They thought that he had at heart the interests of Ireland, and believed that he had the power to wring concessions from the British Parliament. Even under Parnell their minds were set not on Home Rule, but on the land question, which was within their own powers of understanding. They knew better than the English that words might be useful for concealing purpose, and that Home Rule was a cloak for the concealment of more practical aims. But with the fall and death of Parnell the whole system collapsed. They had no faith in his successors, and they became indifferent to political agitation. They were glad to be rid of a terrorism which interfered with their ordinary life, kept away from Ireland the visitors who brought money to the country, and alienated the kindly feeling of the English. They turned with hope to a Government awakened to a sense of their privations, and they look forward to material benefits in the future. They continue to return, in obedience to their priests, members to represent them whom they have judged and found wanting; but they cannot forget the ruin of Parnell, and they attribute his ruin to the priests' influence. The real parties of to-day are the clerical party in the country and the anti-clerical party in the towns. Both sections of Irish Home Rule politicians are well aware of the real feeling of the people, and though they continue to preach Home Rule, they cannot oppose a policy of material improvement. They accordingly proclaim that the Irish will accept all that is offered, but will still demand independence and separation, although they are aware that such revolutions can never come about, unless some remarkable leader in the future succeeds in cajoling or coercing a weak central Government. Meantime the material improvement of the country would tend more and more to knit together the people of the two islands, and to show the necessity of union. Much of the bitterness of American Irishmen is due to the fact that they are obliged to seek a livelihood abroad, while their hearts are at home; and any growth of home prosperity, which might tend to the reduction of emigration, would lead to better feeling in Ireland.

But in order to carry out effectively such a system of administration a more complete organisation is required. At

present the affairs of the country are carried on by numerous independent boards and departments, such as the Board of Works, the Local Government Board, the Congested Districts Board, &c.; and of these the last can only be regarded as experimental, and takes action only in certain districts while others which also require aid are beyond its limits. General schemes for railways or drainage require a more powerful organisation, and duties require to be redistributed in accordance with a growing amount of work. It has been proposed to create a department of agriculture and industry to serve the whole country, but the execution of public works is at least as important as the developement of agriculture and of fisheries, or the improvement of stock. The new organisation should provide also for this important department, and it should be armed with sufficient power, and placed in the hands of men who will devote themselves to the subject, and make themselves familiar on the spot with every aspect of the various delicate cases which must arise.

Other questions in Ireland will no doubt demand the careful consideration of Government, especially those concerned with land laws and education. Legislation has now reduced the landlord to a condition which takes from him all power over the tenantry, so long as they pay the rent fixed by Government, and which has left him little interest in the improvement of property, while still heavily charging him with rates not proportioned to his reduced income. The good will of the tenant is often purchased at a fancy price, while the landlord is unable to sell his interest except at a ruinous loss. He no doubt often obtains his rent more regularly than in the old days, but his income has often been reduced by half or by three-quarters.

It has not been for the general good that capital should be so reduced, in cases when good landlords applied their wealth to the benefit of their property. Ireland has suffered more than England or Scotland by agricultural depression, because the resources of the landed class have been more generally exhausted. In England, even in counties where agriculture is almost ruined, families are found whose wealth enables them to help the peasantry. In Ireland one may travel for a whole day through the poorer districts without seeing a country gentleman's house. In such a country improvements by private enterprise are impossible, and it becomes a question whether starvation is to be combated by occasional action in bad years, which is at best a temporary expedient to meet an emergency, or by

a steady and constant action under an organised system of administration.

In some parts of the country—especially on the south shores of Connemara—the country is so utterly desolate and unfit for habitation, that money sunk in public works may appear to be wasted. The population originally attracted by the fisheries was increased by the growth of grass farms to the north. The fishing industry has decreased, either by the disappearance of the fish—as asserted—or by a gradual change in the habits of the peasantry. In such a case it would seem that the only hope lies in the migration or emigration of the population. If the fisheries are capable of revival, it is evident that they can only succeed if fishing harbours are established, and railway communication made direct to the markets, and brought down to the piers.

What has been said in these pages may perhaps show that the poverty of Ireland is not due entirely to the indolence of its inhabitants, or to the absence of natural resources. It is due yet more to want of capital and want of knowledge. The hardy peasantry have fought a long fight against destitution and natural disadvantages. By emigration and migratory labour they have kept half the poor out of the workhouse. They require to be led and trained, but they furnish us with much good material for the navy, and in a less degree for the army, and public aid, wisely distributed, would in time dissipate a sense of wrong which is not altogether without cause, and would spread in its place prosperity and content, with a sense of the importance of union wherein lies strength.

- ART. V.—1. *The Collection of Autograph Letters and Historical Documents formed by* ALFRED MORRISON. Second Series: *The Hamilton and Nelson Papers* (1756–1815). Privately printed. 2 vols. Imp. 8vo. 1893–4.
2. *Emma, Lady Hamilton.* By HILDA GAMLIN. 4to. Liverpool: 1891.
3. *Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.* By JOHN CORDY JEAFFRESON. 2 vols. Post 8vo. London: 1888.
4. *The Queen of Naples and Lord Nelson.* By JOHN CORDY JEAFFRESON. 2 vols. Post 8vo. London: 1889.
5. *Memoirs of Lady Hamilton.* 8vo. London: 1815.
6. *Authentic Narrative of the Death of Lord Nelson.* By WILLIAM BEATTY, M.D. Crown 8vo. London: 1807; second edition, 1895.

LESS than an hour before the first shot was fired at Trafalgar, Nelson, retiring to his cabin, wrote what has been called ‘a codicil to his will,’ and was, at any rate, a formal document, signed in the presence of witnesses, Captain Hardy and Captain Blackwood, in which, after enumerating services rendered to his king and country by ‘Emma Hamilton, widow of the Right Honourable Sir William Hamilton,’ he concluded: ‘I leave Emma Lady Hamilton therefore a legacy to my king and country, that they will give her an ample provision to maintain her rank in life. I also leave to the beneficence of my country my adopted daughter Horatia Nelson Thompson; and I desire she will use in future the name of Nelson only.’ The force of the ‘codicil’ was strengthened in public opinion by Dr. Beatty’s narrative, from which it appeared that several times after he was wounded, Nelson reverted to the subject of it—the provision for Lady Hamilton and his adopted daughter; and that nearly his last words, addressed to Dr. Scott his chaplain, were—‘Remember that I leave Lady Hamilton and my daughter Horatia as a legacy to my country: never forget Horatia.’ They were followed only by what may more properly be considered his legacy to his country, embodying the work of his life in his last ejaculation, ‘Thank God, I have done my duty.’ This dying scene, the memory of Nelson’s last wishes, and the knowledge that her career was very intimately mixed up with that of Nelson, have always given a special interest to the story of Lady Hamilton. And yet, though often talked of, and differently

represented as the vilest and most abandoned of her sex, or as an erring but pure woman, scandalously neglected in her time of need by an ungrateful country, it is only of late years that the materials for a correct judgement have been within our reach; and even these, imperfectly examined, have led to strange misrepresentations.

To those interested in the matter it has long been known that Mr. Alfred Morrison was gradually enriching his splendid collection of historical manuscripts with original letters and other documents illustrating the relations of Nelson and Lady Hamilton, which, with a rare liberality, he has permitted students of Nelson history to examine and even to copy. He has now largely increased our debt of gratitude by having the text of these documents printed, so as to be at once more accessible and beyond the risk of accident. It is not too much to say that in the vast mass of literature which has sprung up round Nelson's name, there is nothing of even approximately equal interest or value, with the one exception of Sir Harris Nicolas's 'Dispatches' and Letters of Lord Nelson,' a work perfect in itself as to the professional merits of the great admiral, but scarcely touching on his private life and the emotional side of his character. The volumes have been carefully edited and are beautifully printed, and though not published, in the technical sense of the word, are, by the generosity of the owner, to be found in our principal public libraries.

Mrs. Gamlin, whose handsome and splendidly illustrated volume stands second on our list, seems to have written rather to sustain a thesis than to elucidate the truth. Though her work was published three years before the complete issue of Mr. Morrison's, she had permission to examine the original documents in Mr. Morrison's possession, and did so with a painstaking partiality which deprives the result of all value as an historical or biographical record. We are not aware that Mrs. Gamlin possesses, or claims to possess, any exceptional skill in the appreciation of manuscripts; but, with respect to these most interesting papers, having started with a strong prejudice, she has felt neither hesitation nor scruple in pronouncing as 'forgeries' all those letters—and they are many—which militate against her opinion. No question of paper, ink, watermark, or similar details enters into her discussion; some of the more important documents she has condemned without having even seen them. The one criterion which she accepts is agreement with a preformed estimate of

character. Anything more unscientific or unsatisfactory it is difficult to conceive. In one direction only—independent of the pictures—has Mrs. Gamlin's book any biographical value. Living in Cheshire, she has been able to collect some local traditions as to the childhood and early surroundings of her heroine; but these, when all is said, are but few and of no great importance.

Mr. Jeaffreson's two works, named above, stand on a higher level, though their excessive diffuseness and frequent repetitions render them unpleasant reading. They are based largely on Mr. Morrison's manuscripts, and may, to some extent, be considered as introducing these to the public. Mr. Jeaffreson has also examined some of the manuscripts in the British Museum,* and has endeavoured to produce pictures of a 'real Lady Hamilton,' a 'real Lord Nelson,' though we doubt whether the 'reality' of the pictures will be accepted by any independent student; whether they are not, in fact, caricatures rather than portraits. The original 'Memoirs of Lady Hamilton,' first published very shortly after her death, and frequently reprinted, is the foundation of much that has passed current as the story of her life. It has been vigorously denounced, especially by Mr. Paget,† as an infamous book; and is, indeed, written in a superior and sanctimonious tone which is exceedingly offensive. It is also throughout inspired by a feeling of savage hate for its subject, but withal it contains lies and truth curiously mixed up in a manner which suggests Lady Hamilton herself as their origin, and the probability of its author being that 'Mr.' Harrison who, after being hired by Lady Hamilton to write a Life of Nelson, and being admitted for several months to her confidence, quarrelled with her, stole a quantity of her papers, and in 1814 disgusted the country

* Quite recently the British Museum has acquired an enormous mass of Nelson's papers till now preserved in the family. So far as Nelson's own letters are concerned, most, if not all of them, were put at the disposal of Sir Harris Nicolas when he was collecting materials for his great work; but the bulk of the correspondence to Nelson was foreign to Nicolas's purpose, and the greater number of Lady Hamilton's letters were probably not shown to him. These papers, now in the Museum, have not yet been arranged or catalogued; and though the present writer has been permitted to examine them, with some interesting results, he cannot hazard an opinion as to what a closer and more prolonged search may reveal.

† Paradoxes and Puzzles; in the article which first appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' April 1860.

by the publication of 'The Letters of Lord Nelson to Lady 'Hamilton,' a work severely, but not too severely, scourged at the time in this Journal.* In any case, however, the 'Memoirs' does occasionally stumble on the truth, though its unsupported testimony has very little weight. But the interest which attaches to the subject of these memoirs and papers, as a key to the composite character of Nelson, warrants our examining it in some detail by the new light which now shines on it. We wish to know, so far as possible, what manner of person this was who exercised such a strong influence over our national hero; who—it has been said—persuaded him to the commission of gross errors and shameful crimes; who—it has also been said—persuaded him to cast the soft pleasures of love behind him, and to go forth conquering and to conquer, the saviour of England and of Europe. About this a great deal of nonsense has been talked; the character of the woman has been ignored, the character of the man has been lost sight of. The nature and degree of the influence can only be understood when we have fully realised what manner of person Lady Hamilton really was.

'Emy Dr. of Henry Lyon smith of Nesse by Mary his 'wife. Bap. May 12, 1765;' 'Henry Lyon of Denhall 'smith. Bur. June 21, 1765.' These two extracts from the registers of Great Neston, in Cheshire, contain all that is absolutely known of the birth and the father of the girl, who, after calling herself Emly, Amy, Emily, and finally Emma, with a surname sometimes Lyon and sometimes Harte, ultimately acquired by marriage a legal title to the name of Hamilton, by which she is more commonly known. The date of her birth is quite uncertain. In after years she always kept April 26 as her birthday, and Mrs. Gamlin has supposed that she was born just sixteen days before her baptism. The facts of her early career show that this is extremely improbable. The legally attested certificate of her death, on January 15, 1815, gives her age as 51, from which Mr. Paget assumes that she was born in 1764, and Mr. Jeaffreson that she was born in 1763. With much greater probability the anonymous author of the 'Memoirs' puts the date of her birth as 1761. Of Lyon, the village smith, nothing whatever is known more than is said in the register. Mary Lyon, after her husband's death, crossed the Dee into Flintshire, and lived for some time

* 'Edinburgh Review,' vol. xxiii. p. 398.

with her mother, Mrs. Kidd, at or near Hawarden. She seems to have been a capable, industrious woman, more or less able to read and write, and respectable according to the standard of her class. It is not improbable that she married again. In later life she was known as Mrs. Cadogan, and her daughter, in her will, described her as Mary Doggen, Doggin, or Cadogan. If, however, there was a second husband, he had died before Mrs. Cadogan comes into notice. She had a sister, Amy Moore, married in Liverpool, after whom the child was named—*Emy* being, it is said, the local spelling. A Henry Cadogan, who comes into the story, may possibly have been a kinsman of the hypothetical husband, and several Connors are described as cousins.

As a child, Amy learnt to read and write and to talk broad Cheshire; as a young girl, she was for some time nursemaid in the family of Mrs. Thomas, the wife of a surgeon practising in Hawarden. From Mrs. Thomas's she came up to London, where she is said to have been in the service of Mrs. Linley, of Drury Lane Theatre; of Dr. Budd, physician of St. Bartholomew's; of a fruiterer in St. James's; of Mrs. Kelly of Arlington Street, a woman known—on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle—as the Abbess, and to have lived for some time with John Willett Payne, commonly known as Jack Payne, and described as at that time regulating captain* for London. All this is very doubtful. No dates are given, and many of the details are certainly false. She is said to have left Mrs. Linley's service in grief for the death of her son Samuel, a midshipman. But Samuel Linley did not die till December 1778. Dr. Budd did not settle in London till 1780; and Jack Payne, who never was on the regulating service, was still a lieutenant in the beginning of 1779, when he may have been in London for a short time. The only fact which stands out among the vague and uncertain statements is that about the end of 1779 or beginning of 1780—when, according to Mrs. Gamlin, she was still some months short of fifteen—she gave birth to a little girl, which was taken care of by old Mrs. Kidd at Hawarden.

It is said that after this she was in utter want and reduced to the lowest degradation, from which she escaped, in the summer of 1780, to appear as Hygeia or the Goddess of Health, in the exhibition of the notorious James Graham.

* A 'regulating captain' was a captain in the navy appointed to some station on shore for the duty of impressing or entering seamen.

We first get on something like firm ground in the beginning of 1781, at which time she had attracted the notice of Sir Harry Fetherstonehaugh, of Up Park, Sussex, 'a dissolute 'and hard-riding baronet,' with whom she lived for some eight or ten months, and, it is said, nearly ruined him 'by 'the extravagant profusion into which he plunged for her 'sake.' By Christmas 1781 her reckless extravagance and faithlessness had disgusted her protector, and he abruptly dismissed her, though within a few months of a second *accouchement*. It may well be, indeed, that the discovery of this, added to the knowledge of her misconduct, was the cause of what has been described as Fetherstonehaugh's heartlessness in sending her away, with no more money than sufficient to pay her travelling expenses to Hawarden.

Among her too intimate friends at Up Park was Charles Greville, second son of the first Earl of Warwick (of that creation), who possibly had reason to consider himself the father of the expected infant. It was at any rate to him that the girl, now signing herself Emly Hart, turned for assistance and support. These Greville gave her, with much good advice as to her behaviour. He put it fairly before her that if she came to live with him she must drop all her connexions and old friends. He pretended to no sentiment, though, at the same time, he was prepared to act liberally. 'As to the child,' he wrote on January 10, 1782—the first certain date since her baptism—'Sir H. may be 'informed of circumstances which may reasonably make 'him doubt, and it is not worth while to make it a subject 'of altercation. Its mother shall obtain it kindness from 'me, and it shall never want.' It would seem probable, however, that the child was stillborn, as nothing further was heard of it; and before the summer of 1782 Miss Harte was living with Greville in a small house immediately adjoining Paddington Green—a 'ringless bride,' in the euphemistic language of Mr. Jeaffreson, or, as Mr. Paget prefers to put it, 'his wife in everything except in legal 'title to the name'—words surely grossly misapplied in reference to a woman of Miss Harte's antecedents.

It may be that in course of time she became genuinely attached to Greville. Her letters to him during their occasional separations read prettily—despite their barbarous spelling—couched in language often almost childish in its *naïveté*. It has been suggested that Greville had, at one time, the idea of marrying her. For this there are no grounds whatever. Greville was fond of her as of a beautiful

toy; but neither in his letters nor in his demeanour towards her, from first to last, does there appear any touch of sentiment. For his own comfort and gratification he had her instructed, and especially in music and singing, which she studied with marked success, her voice being delicious, though her ear, it is said, was by no means accurate. It was early in this companionship that Greville introduced her to Romney, who was captivated by her beauty and became her slave for life. With Greville's knowledge and approval, the acquaintance grew to friendship, and though the statement that she sat to Romney and other painters as a professional model is unfounded, she did sit frequently for portraits, or for pictures which are virtually portraits. The number of these which Romney painted is very great—twenty-four, taken at this period or later, have been enumerated, and there are probably more. Of one of them the private history peeps out in Greville's letters to his uncle, Sir William Hamilton. Writing in October, 1784, he says: 'Let me know how the Bacchante is to be paid. I will have it packed when an opportunity offers. The dog was ugly, and I make him paint it again;' and a few months later, in January, 1785: 'Emma's picture shall be sent by the first ship. I wish Romney yet to mend the dog.'

Many, if not all of these, are highly idealised: she posed in character, and in most of them—notably in that in the National Portrait Gallery—the expression is one of childlike innocence, which can scarcely have been the characteristic of a woman of from twenty to twenty-five, who had been leading a public life almost from childhood. Her surpassing beauty, as it still shines out from Romney's canvas, and her later association with Nelson, have cast a glamour over her memory and led to much ill-timed and ill-placed gush; as when Mr. Jeaffreson speaks of her—the mother of two illegitimate children, the year-long associate of Fetherstonehaugh and his dissolute companions, the waif of the streets—as 'a delicate and pure-minded girl.' It may, nevertheless, be conceded that, for a young woman of her class, the four years spent in the intimate society of Greville, a man of cultivated and refined taste, was a very great advantage, and that during this period her mind received a veneer of cultivation, her manners an outward show of refinement, and her beauty assumed a more delicate or even ethereal expression. With a staff consisting of two maid servants and her mother—Mrs. Cadogan—who acted as duenna in Greville's absence,

she had charge of the household, which was kept up at the modest cost of about 300*l.* a year. Greville's whole income would seem not to have exceeded 500*l.* *

In 1784 he was visited by his maternal uncle, Sir William Hamilton, for many years English ambassador at the Court of Naples, and then home on leave. Though twenty years older than his nephew, there was little restraint or dignity in their intercourse; and though Hamilton occasionally addressed his nephew as 'My dear Charles,' Greville always addressed his uncle as 'My dear Hamilton.' Lady Hamilton, who had brought her husband a handsome estate of 5,000*l.* a year, and who was still passionately in love with him after twenty-five years of marriage, had died in 1782; and it was currently supposed that Hamilton, now fifty-four, but with the appearance of forty, had come to England to look out for a second wife. The idea was not pleasing to Greville, who had learned to consider himself as his uncle's heir; and it may be supposed that he was not sorry to notice Hamilton's undisguised admiration of Emma's beauty, or to listen to the rapturous expression of it. According to a conversation more or less imaginary, reported by Mr. Jeaffreson, Greville assented to his uncle's enthusiasm, adding, 'She is, I think, 'about as perfect a thing as can be found in all nature.' 'My dear Charles,' replied the uncle, 'she is better than 'anything in nature. In her particular way she is finer 'than anything that is to be found in antique art.' 'I 'agree with you,' answered Greville; 'I don't think that even 'art has done anything so good.' Hamilton easily fell into the habit of calling in every afternoon and spending some time in easy conversation with Emma, whom he taught to address him as Pliny; and gradually the girl, who at first spoke of him as 'an old man,' began to forget his age and to think him charming. In this, however, there was nothing underhand; she told Greville frankly enough that next to himself she loved Hamilton, and in a letter of June 15, 1784, wrote, 'Tell Sir William everything you can, and tell 'him I am sorry our situation prevented me from giving 'him a kiss.'

The progress of this friendship and the story of the transfer of Emma to the protection of Sir William is a curious study of human nature, and, in a more particular sense, of human nature in the eighteenth century. Greville's affairs were already embarrassed, and he seems from the first to have had three objects steadily in view: to get rid of an encumbrance which might be a stumbling-block in the

way of his making a good marriage; to prevent Hamilton marrying again; and to secure his aid in extricating himself from his present difficulties. After Hamilton's return to Naples he wrote to him, in January, 1785:—

'Emma certainly is much improved since she has been with me. She has none of the bad habits which giddiness and inexperience encouraged, and which bad choice of company introduced. She has much pride, and submits to solitude rather than admit of one improper acquaintance. She is naturally elegant and fits herself easily to any situation, having quickness and sensibility. . . . If I was independent I should think so little of any other connexion that I never would marry. I have not an idea of it at present, but if any proper opportunity offered I should be much harassed, not know how to manage or how to fix Emma to her satisfaction.'

A couple of months later he went a step further and wrote on March 10:—

'They say here that you are in love. I know you love variety and are a general flirt, and of the sixty English, what with widows and young married ladies, an amateur may be caught. . . . If you did not choose a wife, I wish the tea-maker of Edgeware Row was yours, if I could without banishing myself from a visit to Naples. . . . I should not write to you thus if I did not think you seemed as partial as I am to her. She would not hear at once of any change, and from no one that was not liked by her. . . . I am not a dog in the manger; if I could go on I would never make this arrangement, but to be reduced to a standstill and involve myself in distress further than I could extricate myself, and then to be unable to provide for her at all, would make me miserable.'

Several other letters of a similar character followed, and on December 3, after nearly a year's negotiation, if it may be called so, he wrote: 'As you have fully communicated your sentiments to me, and you know mine relative to Emma, I shall not enter further on the subject than to explain to you the occasion of your receiving the inclosed.' The 'inclosed' was a letter from Emma, saying that as Greville was obliged to be from home for six or eight months, she would be glad to pay him a visit 'if you are agreeable.' At the end of the time Greville would come and take her home. Mr. Jeaffreson expresses a strong opinion that Emma wrote this in ignorance and innocence. The idea is scarcely supported by Greville's letter of January 20, 1786, in which, after speaking of the preparations for the girl's journey, he goes on:—

'She talks of the chances of our not meeting again, and that on the least neglect she will accept your offers and that she will by her conduct merit your kindness. She must have in her mind a stronger

impression of the chances than she expresses, but she says that she would not put herself in the reach of chances with any person but yourself, and she does not say this from compliment but from her heart.'

To us nothing can well appear more cold-blooded than Greville's behaviour in this matter, and it can only be explained on the supposition that, notwithstanding his protestations of affection, he regarded her simply as one of the frail sisterhood, void alike of feeling or sensibility. And yet, in truth, Emma ought not to be so classed. Whatever she was before she linked her fortunes to Greville's, it appears probable that she had become really fond of him. In her residence with him there was none of that gilded splendour which so often casts a false brilliance over vice: she was housed and dressed as became the wife of a man of very limited means. Her yearly allowance for dress and pocket money was only 20*l.*; and in other ways her life was retired, almost solitary, with, in Greville's absence, her mother for her sole companion, Romney her sole friend, reading and singing her sole amusement. Anything approaching to gaiety or dissipation was unknown. Such a manner of life was certainly as foreign to her later as it was to her earlier character, and may be taken as evidence that she honestly loved the man for whom she endured it. When he deliberately sold her to his uncle he robbed her of that guiding principle which had ruled her for the last four years; and her future conduct, if restrained by prudence, appears in a widely different light from that which shone on it in the modest house by Paddington Green. On April 30, four days after her arrival at Naples, she wrote:—

'I dreaded sitting down to write, for I try to appear as cheerful before Sir William as I could, and I am sure to cry the moment I think of you. . . . To live without you is impossible. I love you to that degree, that at this time there is not a hardship upon earth, either of poverty, hunger, cold, death, or even to walk barefooted to Scotland to see you, but what I would undergo. Therefore, my dear, dear Greville, if you do love me, for my sake try all you can to come here as soon as possible. . . . I respect Sir William, I have a great regard for him . . . and he loves me. But he can never be anything nearer to me than your uncle and my sincere friend. He never can be my lover.'

And the next day she added:—

'I have had a conversation this morning with Sir William that has made me mad. He speaks—no, I do not know what to make of it. But, Greville, dear Greville, write some comfort to me. . . . For God's

sake write to me and come to me, for Sir W. shall never be anything to me but your friend.'

It may, of course, be said, 'the lady protests too much;' but, making every allowance for emotional exaggeration, we are tempted to believe that at the time she really fancied that she felt all this. And later letters tell the same story. Absence made the heart grow fonder, and her appeals to Greville read like those of a love-sick village maiden. On July 22 she wrote:—

'I am only writing to beg of you, for God's sake, to send me one letter, if it is only a farewell. I have been from you going of six months, and you have wrote one letter to me, instead of which I have sent fourteen to you. So pray, let me beg of you, my much beloved Greville, only one line from your dear, dear hands. You don't know how thankful I shall be for it. . . . Life is insupportable without you. Oh! my heart is entirely broke. Then, for God's sake, my ever dear Greville, do write to me some comfort. . . . I am poor, helpless, and forlorn. I have lived with you five years, and you have sent me to a strange place, and no one prospect but thinking you was coming to me. Instead of which I was told I was to live, you know how, with Sir William. No; I respect him; but no, never! Shall he perhaps live with me for a little while like you and send me to England? Then, what am I to do? What is to become of me?'

And between whiles she described the various lords, princes and the king himself who were paying their court to her—always to emphasise the conclusion that 'there is not a king or a prince on earth that could make me happy without you.' 'Pray write,' she added to a long letter on August 1, 'pray write, for nothing will make me so angry, and it is not to your interest to disoblige me, for you don't know the power I have here. Only I never will be his mistress. If you affront me, I will make him marry me.'

It was her last protest; but having accepted the position, Emma lost no time in working towards the end with which she had threatened Greville—the making Hamilton marry her. In no other way can we explain the exuberance of affection in her notes to Sir William, which, coming within a few months of those to Greville, would seem to show that she had a stock of such declarations on hand and ready for her purpose. Thus on January 18, 1787, she wrote:—

'Oh, my dearest Sir William, I have just received your dear sweet letter. It has charmed me. I don't know what to say to you to thank you in words kind enough. Oh, how kind! Do you call me your dear friend? Ah, what a happy creature is your Emma!

Me that had no friend, no protector, nobody that I could trust, and now to be the friend, the Emma, of Sir William Hamilton.'

And again, apparently a few days later:—

'I can't be happy till I have wrote to you, my dearest Sir William, though it is so lately I saw you. But what of that to a person that loves as I do? One hour's absence is a year, and I shall count the hours and moments until Saturday, when I shall find myself once more in your kind dear arms, my dear Sir William, my friend, my all, my earthly good, every kind name in one. You are to me eating, drinking, and clothing—my comforter in distress. Then why shall I not love you? Indeed, I must and ought, whilst life is left in me, or reason to think on you. . . . Pray, one little line, if you have time, just that I may kiss your name.'

Of Emma's life at Naples during the next few years it is needless to say much. The public sense of morality, less cogent in Naples than in London, did not feel aggrieved when the sinners were—on the one hand, the English Ambassador, handsome, wealthy, and with an agreeable fund of wit and humour, and on the other, an exceedingly beautiful woman, who sang delightfully, had a remarkable histrionic and mimetic talent, with a pretty turn for bantering and sprightly conversation. She had the best masters in Naples and she worked hard, so that she soon acquired a fluent knowledge of Italian and improved in her singing and music. She was not received at court, but society was less punctilious and readily yielded to Hamilton's insistence. 'Sir William,' she wrote to Greville on August 4, 1787, 'is very fond of me and very kind to me. . . . He is never a moment from me. He goes nowhere without me. He has no dinners but what I can be of the party. Nobody comes without they are civil to me.' Her letter gives an interesting account of the world around, as it appeared to her; and though considerable allowance must be made for her vanity, her habitual exaggeration, and the fact that in writing to Greville she was not unnaturally desirous of letting him know what a treasure he had so lightly parted with, its essential truth is confirmed from many independent sources.

'We have been at Sorrento,' she wrote, 'on a visit for ten days. . . . The last night I sang fifteen songs. One was a recitative from an opera at St. Carlo's, the finest thing you ever heard, that for ten minutes after I sung it there was such a clapping that I was obliged to sing it over again. And I sung after that one with a tambourin, in the character of a young girl with a raree show, the prettiest thing you ever heard. In short, I left the people at Sorrento with their heads turned. I left some dying, some crying, and some in despair.'

Mind you, this was all nobility, as proud as the devil. But we humbled them.'

After this they went to Ischia, on a visit to the Countess Mahoney, who, she says—

'came down to the seashore to meet us. She took me in her arms and kissed me, and thanked Sir William for bringing her the company of so beautiful and lovely a woman. She took us to her house, where there was a full conversazione, and though I was in undress, only having a muslin chemise, very thin, yet the admiration I met with was surprising. The Countess made me sit by her, and seemed to have pleasure to distinguish me by every mark of attention, and they all allowed they had never seen such a *bellissima creatura* in all their life.'

After which she went on to say that she had refused an offer of 6,000*l.* to go to Madrid for three years as 'first woman in the Italian Opera,' and was in treaty with Galini for a season in London, for which she was to get 2,000*l.*, on which terms Sir William would allow her to sing at Hanover Square. Some months before this Goethe had visited Naples, and in a letter dated March 16, 1787, has given the earliest account of the celebrated attitudes:—

'Sir William Hamilton,' he wrote, 'after long love and study of art, has at length discovered the most perfect of the wonders of nature and art in a beautiful young woman. She lives with him; an English woman of about twenty years old. She is very handsome and of a beautiful figure. The old knight has had made for her a Greek costume which becomes her extremely. Dressed in this and letting her hair loose and taking a couple of shawls, she exhibits every possible variety of posture, expression, and look, so that at the last the spectator almost fancies it is a dream. One beholds here in perfection, in movement, in ravishing variety, all that the greatest of artists have rejoiced to be able to produce. Standing, kneeling, sitting, lying down, grave or sad, playful, exulting, repentant, wanton, menacing, anxious—all mental states follow rapidly one after another. With wonderful taste she suits the folding of her veil to each expression, and with the same handkerchief makes every kind of headdress. The old knight holds the light for her and enters into the exhibition with his whole soul.'

He was, indeed, very well content with his bargain and the expressions of love which Emma lavished on him. On December 18, 1787, he wrote to Greville from Caserta:—

'I am out almost every day on shooting parties, but I find my house comfortable in the evening with Emma's society. You can have no idea of the improvement she makes daily in every respect—manners, language, and music particularly. She has now applied closely to singing five months, and I have her master (an excellent one) in the house, so that she takes three lessons a day; her voice is remarkably fine, and she begins now to have a command over it. . . . I can

assure you her behaviour is such as has acquired her many sensible admirers, and we have a good man society, and all the female nobility, with the queen at their head, show her every distant civility.'

Some eighteen months later he had realised what Emma was aiming at, and expressed his doubts about it to Greville. On May 26, 1789, he wrote:—

'Emma often asks me, do you love me? ay, but as well as your new apartment? . . . Certainly she would be welcome to share with me, *on our present footing*, all I have during my life; but I fear her views are beyond what I can bring myself to execute, and that when her hopes on that point are over, that she will make herself and me unhappy.'

In the following winter the Duchess of Argyll came to Naples. In age and failing health she still preserved the remarkable beauty and the gentle temper which had won for her two successive ducal coronets; and whether from believing the rumour of a private marriage, which we may not uncharitably impute to Emma herself, or from genuine goodness of heart, she set the example of visiting and receiving her, which other English ladies were not slow to follow. Mr. Jeaffreson is probably correct in his suggestion that this had great weight with Hamilton, although it was not till nearly a year later that he finally decided to marry her. In May, 1791, with Emma in his company, he returned to England for a few months, during which Romney had a last opportunity of painting the portrait of his 'divine lady.' They visited Hamilton's cousin, William Beckford, at Fonthill, and there, for the first time in England, Emma exhibited her 'attitudes' to an admiring crowd of guests. On September 6 they were married at Marylebone Church, and almost immediately afterwards started for Naples, passing through Paris, where they stayed for a few days, and where, according to the story which Emma told more than twenty years later, she was presented to Marie Antoinette, from whom she carried a letter to the Queen of Naples. This is extremely doubtful. Emma was not in the habit of keeping her honours secret, but Marie Antoinette's name has no place in her correspondence, though no sooner was she settled again at Naples than, on December 20, she wrote to Romney:—

'I have been received with open arms by all the Neapolitans of both sexes, by all the foreigners of every distinction. I have been presented to the Queen of Naples by her own desire; she has shown me all sorts of kind and affectionate attentions; in short, I am the happiest woman in the world. . . . We have a many English at Naples, Ladies

Malmesbury, Malden, Plymouth, Carnegie, Wright, &c. They are very kind and attentive to me; they all make it a point to be remarkably civil to me.'

A week later, December 27, Lady Malmesbury wrote to her sister, Lady Elliot:—

'We dined at Caserta yesterday with Sir William and Lady Hamilton. She really behaves as well as possible, and quite wonderfully, considering her origin and education. The queen has received her very kindly as Lady Hamilton, but not as the English minister's wife; and I believe all the English mean to be very civil to her, which is quite right.'*

This was the beginning of the acquaintance between these two celebrated women. During the following years it gradually developed into what had every appearance of intimacy; and Emma, the favourite of the Queen, the wife of the English minister, was recognised as the leader of the Neapolitan society, which conveniently ignored her antecedents and remembered only her beauty, her singing, her acting, and her good humour. All the English who visited or passed through Naples had the same story. Emma's beauty, singing, dancing, attitudes are described as the most noteworthy features of the place. A few days after her former letter Lady Malmesbury wrote again: 'You never saw anything so charming as Lady Hamilton's attitudes. The most graceful statues or pictures do not give you an idea of them. Her dancing of the tarantella is beautiful to a degree . . . the most lively thing possible.'† In August 1796, the 'Petrel,' a small brig of war, came to Naples, and on the 12th, the Prince of Wales's birthday, her captain, Bartholomew James, gave a dinner which was honoured by Prince Augustus and the principal people then at Naples, including, of course, Hamilton and his wife. Captain James has left us an amusing account of the festivity, in which, after the prince had seen over the ship,

'we sat down to dinner, agreeable to the custom of the country, at the early hour of 1. . . . Royal toasts, songs, and every kind of mirth filled up the time till 5 o'clock, in which the tars were not forgotten, for they in their turn drank their royal master and success to the family in their favourite liquor, grog, and afforded the company much entertainment from their songs and their variety of sea amusements; but the loyalty of that exquisite and charming lovely woman, Lady Hamilton, out-

* Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot, 1st Earl of Minto, vol. i. p. 402.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 406.

shone then, as upon every other occasion, the whole party; for in the ecstasy of singing "God save the King" in full chorus with the whole ship's company, she tore her fan to pieces and threw herself into such bewitching attitudes that no mortal soul could refrain from believing her to be an enthusiastic angel from heaven, purposely sent down to celebrate this pleasant, happy festival.'

In the evening the prince gave a ball, to which, says James,

'attended by all the officers of the "Petrel," I went about 8 o'clock, and was extremely entertained at the appearance of the company, which consisted of about 700 of the most fashionable people of all nations in Naples, as well as with the politeness and attention of his Royal Highness and the affable goodness of Lady Hamilton, who did the female honours of the evening, and with whom I had the pleasure of dancing the second dance, the prince having opened the ball with her ladyship.*'

Here is another notice of her from a more exacting critic, Sir Gilbert Elliot, who, after the evacuation of Corsica, was at Naples in December 1796:—

'Lady Hamilton is the most extraordinary compound I ever beheld. Her person is nothing short of monstrous for its enormity, and is growing every day. She tries hard to think size advantageous to her beauty, but is not easy about it. Her face is beautiful; she is all nature and yet all art; that is to say, her manners are perfectly unpolished, of course very easy, though not with the ease of good breeding, but of a barmaid, excessively good-humoured, and wishing to please and be admired by all ages and sorts of persons that come in her way. But besides considerable natural understanding she has acquired since her marriage some knowledge of history and the arts, and one wonders at the application and pains she has taken to make herself what she is. With men her language and conversation are exaggerations of anything I ever heard anywhere.†'

It might, of course, be expected that a man like Elliot would form a less rapturous opinion about Emma and her charms than an enthusiastic naval captain; but there can be no question that during these years she was a great social power, though it may be doubted whether she ever had the influence with the Queen which she loved to claim. On December 18, 1794, she wrote to Greville:—

'No person can be so charming as the queen. She is everything one can wish—the best mother, wife, and friend in the world. I live

* *Journal of Rear-Admiral Bartholomew James (Navy Records Society)*, p. 294.

† *Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot, 1st Earl of Minto*, vol. ii. p. 364.

constantly with her and have done intimately so for two years, and I never have in all that time seen anything but goodness and sincerity in her, and if ever you hear any lies about her contradict them; and if you should see a cursed book written by a vile French dog with her character in it, don't believe one word.'

It is, however, certain that in this there is much exaggeration, and that the Queen, whilst recognising her beauty and ability, and receiving her as a friend and *confidante*, did so mainly from political motives. As the fury of the French Revolution extended, as her brother-in-law and her sister were remorselessly sacrificed to it, her hatred of the Jacobins became more and more bitter, at the same time that she felt and knew herself to be surrounded by spies in the French interest. She leant for support on the English government and the English minister, but her private communication with him was necessarily restricted. The appearance of intimacy with Emma removed the difficulty. She could see and speak with her whenever and wherever she liked; their secret converse was supposed to be in the interests of immorality rather than of politics. The Italian Jacobins and French agents did not love the Queen or her *confidante*: to them the Queen was Messalina; Emma, a vulgar courtesan; but the part of confidential agent between the Queen and the English minister, which Emma was really playing, does not seem to have been suspected. Probably at the time Emma persuaded herself that she had a much more important share in the business; certainly in after years her representations of it continued to get more and more grand, till in the end she appeared in her own story as the moving power and guiding spirit of the Queen and the court. That she was nothing of the sort is capable of simple demonstration. Here is one case which has often been referred to. In March 1813, she drew up a statement of the services which she had rendered to the Government, and in it appears the following:—

'By unceasing cultivation of my influence with the queen, and no less watchfulness to turn it to my country's good, it happened that I discovered a courier had brought the King of Naples a private letter from the King of Spain. I prevailed on the queen to take it from his pocket unseen. We found it to contain the King of Spain's resolution to withdraw from the coalition and join the French against England. My husband at this time lay dangerously ill. I prevailed on the queen to allow my taking a copy, with which I immediately despatched a messenger to my Lord Grenville, taking all the necessary precautions; for his safe arrival then became very difficult, and altogether cost me about 400*l.* paid out of my private purse.'

The statement is perfectly clear, but is false from beginning to end. Mr. Jeaffreson has shown, by a detailed examination of Emma's private accounts,* that she had not and could not have 400*l.* in her 'private purse.' No date is given for the service claimed to have been rendered, and, while the mention of the King of Spain's resolution 'to join 'the French against England' would place it in the late summer of 1796, the resolution 'to withdraw from the 'coalition' would throw it back to the previous year, and the distinct reference to Hamilton's serious illness brings it, with certainty, to April 1795. On April 28, 1795, Hamilton wrote to Lord Grenville: 'I only got out of bed yesterday, 'after having been confined to it for thirteen days;' and on the 30th he wrote again, enclosing a copy of a ciphered despatch from the Marquis Galatone, the Neapolitan minister at the Court of Spain, which announced, not any resolution of a war with England, but merely Galatone's suspicion that the Spanish Court was treating for a peace with France.† He gave also the history of the copy:—

'Her Majesty's billet,' he wrote, 'with the copy of the despatch, was sent to Lady Hamilton on the 28th in the afternoon; but as that despatch was to be returned directly, I could only take a hasty sketch of its contents. However, Lady Hamilton having had the honour of seeing the queen yesterday morning, and expressed my wishes of having a copy of that paper to send immediately to your lordship, her Majesty was pleased to promise me one, which was sent to Lady Hamilton yesterday evening. I thought these papers of such importance at this critical juncture that I determined to send off a courier with them directly to your Lordship; but as it would be dangerous to cause any suspicion here, I send this packet by one of my servants to Rome, and have directed Mr. Jenkins to send off a trusty messenger with the utmost secrecy to your Lordship with this packet, and I can depend on Mr. Jenkins's prudent and able execution of this commission. . . . I have only to add, in confirmation of the probability of Spain's being in actual negotiation with France for a peace, that the Queen of Naples told Lady Hamilton yesterday that the King of Naples had received a letter from his brother, the King of Spain, dated April 7, in which he said that he was now seriously thinking of giving peace to his subjects and of putting an end to the effusion of blood. . . . My late fever has left me so exceedingly weak that I am unable to apply long, but I am truly thankful that I have strength enough to send off this despatch.'

* Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson, vol. i. pp. 316-17.

† Public Record Office: Foreign Records, Sicily, vol. 41. A fairly full abstract of this correspondence—not previously known—was contributed by Professor Laughton to the 'United Service Magazine' for April and May 1889.

It will be noticed that Emma neither saw this letter of the King's, nor sent a copy of it to England, and that her share in transmitting Galatone's despatch was merely that of a go-between, the Queen sending her the copy, in the first instance, of her own free will. Of more importance and greater notoriety is the service which Emma is said to have rendered to the English fleet previous to the battle of the Nile. Her claim, in the statement already referred to, is an extraordinary tissue of imaginative falsehood. It has often been given at second-hand, but it is only now that we have it direct from Emma herself. In a few words, it amounts to this—that in June, 1798, Nelson, having been to Egypt in a vain search for the French fleet, came off Naples and sent Troubridge on shore with a note to Hamilton to say that he was short of provisions and water, and that if his wants could not be relieved in one of the ports of Sicily, he must go down the Mediterranean to Gibraltar and leave Naples to its fate. That Hamilton took this note to the Prime Minister, General Acton, who immediately convened a council, at which the King was present, when they came to the resolution that it was impossible to accede to Nelson's request. But that, meanwhile, Lady Hamilton had gone to the Queen, had begged and prayed, and insisted, and finally dictated an order, which the Queen wrote, addressed to all the governors of the ports of Sicily, directing them to give the English fleet every possible assistance; that she sent this order to Nelson by Troubridge; and that, by virtue of it, Nelson was able to water his fleet and go again to Egypt to win the battle of the Nile.

We will not now lay stress on the errors of patent fact further than to point out that when Nelson lay-to off Naples, on June 17, he had not been to Egypt, was not short of water, and said nothing whatever about going to Gibraltar; and, though he asked for clear answers to the questions, 'Are the ports of Naples and Sicily open to his Majesty's fleet? Have the governors orders for our free admission, and for us to be supplied with whatever we may want?' he asked still more urgently for information, for frigates, and for pilots. With all this Emma had nothing to do, and her memory may have played her false. It is different when she speaks of what she herself did: her misstatements about that were not due to a faulty memory, but to a too vivid imagination or to downright lying. We prefer to think that it was to a lively imagination acting in conjunction with excessive vanity, and that the lying was in a great

measure unconscious. However this may be, we can say positively that there was no council either with or without the King present, and consequently no resolution that they could not then break with France. The truth was, indeed, told by Clarke and McArthur, who, years before Pettigrew wrote, quoted Hamilton's letter to Nelson:—‘I went with ‘him [Troubridge] directly to General Acton, and Captain ‘Troubridge has an order to the commanders of all the ‘Sicilian ports that will fully answer your purpose.’ It is now, however, put still more clearly in Hamilton's letters to Lord St. Vincent and to Lord Grenville. In the latter he says:—

‘As Sir Horatio, in his letter to me, said that his friend, Captain Troubridge, knew his mind and would explain it to me, I thought the shortest way would be to carry him to General Acton; and we did more business in half an hour than we should have done in a week in the usual official way here. Captain Troubridge went straight to his point, and put strong questions to the General, who answered them fairly and to the satisfaction of the Captain. As no time was to be lost, the Admiral being now informed of the position and strength of the enemy and desirous of attacking them as soon as possible, I prevailed upon General Acton to write himself an order in the name of his Sicilian Majesty, directed to the governors of every port in Sicily, to supply the king's ships with all kinds of provisions. . . . When Captain Troubridge had received this order from the General and put it into his pocket, his face brightened up and he seemed perfectly happy.’*

So far as is known, Emma's share in the business—and it seems she was determined to have some—was limited to writing a gushing note to Nelson.

‘My dear Admiral,—I write in a hurry, as Captain Troubridge cannot stay a moment. God bless you and send you victorious, and that I may see you bring back Bonaparte with you. Pray send Captain Hardy out to us, for I shall have a fever with anxiety. The queen desires me to say everything that's kind, and bids me say with her whole heart she wishes you victory. God bless you, my dear, dear sir. I will not say how glad I shall be to see you; indeed I cannot describe to you my feelings on your being so near us.’†

It might, perhaps, still be thought that, after all, the Queen did send secret orders. Fortunately, we have in our Foreign Office Records a copy of the letter from the Governor of Syracuse to Acton,† giving a detailed account

* Foreign Office Records, Sicily, vol. 44; ‘United Service Magazine,’ May, 1889.

† Nelson MSS.

† Sicily, vol. 44.

of the arrival of the fleet on July 19, of the perplexity he was in on account of the somewhat vague and yet wide sense of the order 'scritto in nome di S. M. e sottoscritto dal Capitano Generale Cav^{re} Acton con le più vivi pressanti sovrani incaricamenti per accoglienza ed assistenza della tale squadra Inglese, estendosi al di là delle solite prevenzioni, ed individuando molti nuovi e non previsti casi ed occorrenze in contesto dell' armonia ed amicizia di S. M. per la Nazione Inglese,' of his accepting the position because the fleet had come into the harbour without waiting for his permission, and because it was utterly impossible for him to turn them out again.

From first to last, in the contemporary letters of Hamilton, Nelson, the Governor of Syracuse, and even Emma herself, there is no mention of any action taken by the Queen in the matter, nor anything which can lead us to suppose that secret orders were sent; and Emma's statement is positively contradicted by every authentic detail. But it has received general credence because confirmed by Nelson in the last sentence he penned, little more than an hour before he was shot down. To any one who can calmly consider the evidence, it will be clear that as Nelson certainly did not receive the Queen's order, which Emma says he received, and did not, while at Syracuse, know of any secret order, he could afterwards know of it only from what Emma told him—that is to say, that his evidence is of no greater value than Emma's, which is worthless. When Nelson spoke of his own knowledge, his word carries unquestioning acceptance. When he merely repeated Emma's assurance, his testimony on other points may be compared with his reiterated assertion that Emma was a good and virtuous woman.

In September 1793 Nelson, then captain of the 'Agamemnon,' was sent to Naples with Lord Hood's despatch to Hamilton, desiring him to urge the King to strengthen the force of the allies at Toulon with 10,000 men. For a few days he was a guest in Hamilton's house, and carried away pleasant memories of Hamilton's wife, who had been very kind to his stepson, and whom—in a letter to his wife—he described as 'a young woman of amiable manners, who does honour to the station to which she is raised.' During the following five years he was not once at Naples, and, though he not unfrequently wrote Hamilton friendly letters about the course of events, and commonly concluded them with 'my best respects to Lady Hamilton,' there

was certainly no intimacy; nor does it appear that Emma had any recollection of him more than she had of the hundreds of other people who passed across her horizon. In the summer of 1798 things were different. Naples had been sorely pressed by the French. Emma, with all the emotional enthusiasm of her nature, flung herself into the Queen's quarrel, and was eager for the overthrow of the Queen's enemies.

When she learned from her husband that the admiral now sent to the Queen's support was one whom she had formerly known, she immediately prepared to gush over him—to make him believe that she had never forgotten him. The letter which she wrote to him as he was on his way to Egypt has been quoted. When she had the news of the battle she wrote again—a letter addressed, it must be remembered, to an almost total stranger, which is as extraordinary, as monstrous as any that even she ever penned. It is very long, but some sentences of it may serve as a sample:—

'My dear, dear Sir,—. . . I fainted when I heard the joyful news, and fell on my side and am hurt. But what of that! I should feel it a glory to die in such a cause. No! I would not like to die till I see and embrace *the Victor of the Nile*. . . . My head will not permit me to tell you half of the rejoicing. The Neapolitans are mad, and if you was here now you would be killed with kindness. Sonnets on sonnets, illuminations, rejoicing. Not a French dog dare show his face. How I glory in the honour of my country and *my countrymen*. I walk and tread in air with pride, feeling I was born on the same land with the victor Nelson and his gallant band. . . . Little dear Captain Hoste will tell you the rest. He lives with us in the day, for he will not sleep out of his ship, and we love him dearly. He is a fine good lad. Sir William is delighted with him and says he will be a second Nelson. If he is only half a Nelson he will be superior to all others. . . . We are preparing your apartment against you come. I hope it will not be long, for Sir William and I are so impatient to see and embrace you. I wish you could have seen our house the three nights of illuminations; it was covered with your glorious name; there were three thousand lamps, and there should have been three millions if we had had time. . . . God bless you, my dear, dear friend. My dress from head to foot is *alla Nelson*—ask Hoste—even my shawl is blue with gold anchors all over; my earrings are Nelson's anchors; in short, we are be-Nelsoned all over. I send you some sonnets, but I must have taken a ship on purpose to send you all what (is) written on you.' *

Such outrageous flattery, if Nelson could read it, which may be doubtful—for the writing is even worse than the

* Nelson MSS.

spelling—must have prepared him for his reception when he arrived at Naples, and Lady Hamilton, going on board the ‘*Vanguard*,’ threw herself fainting on his breast. As she was a woman of large frame, and during the last few years had got exceedingly stout, the trial to a small, slight-built man, with only one arm, must have been severe. Physically, however, he stood up against it manfully. Morally, he succumbed, and was led captive at the victor’s chariot wheels. The rest is a story which we need not repeat. It belongs to the history of Nelson rather than of Lady Hamilton. By a curious reversal of the ordinary position, it is the man’s character that is held to be at stake rather than the woman’s; but the presentment of the ‘real’ Lady Hamilton—as a woman beautiful, sweet-voiced, and tender; of a kindly nature and a soft heart, yet capable and energetic; but withal excessively vain, boastful, and an unblushing, irresponsible, perhaps unconscious liar—joined to the story of her previous career, goes far to explain the extraordinary influence which she obtained over a man of Nelson’s character.

At Naples, Nelson who was still suffering from the effects of the wound received in the battle of the Nile, and from the mental strain of the long search for the French fleet—lived in the Hamiltons’ house, and Emma nursed him, fondled him, flattered him, fêted him. When the court moved to Palermo, Nelson and the Hamiltons kept house together, and, according to report, which was certainly exaggerated, plunged into reckless dissipation. Lady Minto at Vienna was told that

‘every sort of gaming went on half the night. Nelson used to sit with large parcels of gold before him and generally go to sleep, Lady Hamilton taking from the heap without counting, and playing with his money to the amount of 500*l.* a night. Her rage is play, and Sir William says when he is dead she will be a beggar.’*

But as many of the details which reached Lady Minto at the same time were grossly inaccurate, the testimony of her witness is tainted, though the consensus of evidence from other sources must be accepted as proof that the scandal of their relations was widely talked of. A little earlier, March 23, 1800, Lord Minto himself wrote:—

‘I have letters from Nelson and Lady Hamilton. It does not seem clear that he will go home. I hope he will not for his own sake, and he will, at least, I hope, take Malta first. He does not seem at all

* *Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot, First Earl of Minto*, iii. 139.

conscious of the sort of discredit he has fallen into or the cause of it, for he writes still not wisely, about Lady Hamilton and all that. But it is hard to condemn and use ill a hero, as he is in his own element, for being foolish about a woman who has art enough to make fools of many wiser than an admiral.*

On their journey home from Naples in September and October 1800, Nelson and the Hamiltons, after passing through Vienna and Prague, stayed for some days at Dresden, where they made the acquaintance of Mrs. St. George, a lively young widow, who noted in her journal her impressions of the hero, and, more fully, of Lady Hamilton.† Emma was essentially a man's beauty, and Mrs. St. George was an exacting critic, but her descriptions, unflattering as they are, are consonant with the enthusiasm of Captain James or the severer judgement of Sir Gilbert Elliot. Under date October 3, she says:—

'Lady Hamilton is bold, forward, coarse, assuming, and vain. Her figure is colossal, but, excepting her feet, which are hideous, well shaped. Her bones are large, and she is exceedingly *embonpoint*. She resembles the bust of Ariadne; the shape of all her features is fine, as is the form of her head and particularly her ears; her teeth are a little irregular, but tolerably white; her eyes light blue, with a brown spot in one, which, though a defect, takes nothing away from her beauty and expression. Her eyebrows and hair are dark, and her complexion coarse. Her expression is strongly marked, variable and interesting; her movements in common life ungraceful; her voice loud yet not disagreeable. Lord Nelson is a little man, without any dignity. . . . Lady Hamilton takes possession of him, and he is a willing captive, the most submissive and devoted I have seen. . . . After dinner we had several songs in honour of Lord Nelson, written by Miss Knight and sung by Lady Hamilton. She puffs the incense full in his face, but he receives it with pleasure and snuffs it up very cordially.'

Four days later, October 7, she noted: 'Breakfasted with Lady Hamilton, and saw her represent in succession the best statues and paintings extant.' Her description of the attitudes closely resembles that of Goethe, written nearly fourteen years before, and the well-known drawings of Rehberg. But having exhausted her enthusiasm, she resumes the functions of censor.

'It is remarkable,' she says, 'that though coarse and ungraceful in

* Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot, First Earl of Minto, iii. 114.

† Mrs. St. George, by her second marriage, Mrs. Trench, was the mother of Archbishop Trench, by whom her journal was privately printed in 1861.

common life, she becomes highly graceful and even beautiful during this performance. It is also singular that, in spite of her imitation of the finest ancient draperies, her usual dress is tasteless, vulgar, loaded and unbecoming. She has borrowed several of my gowns, and much admires my dress, which cannot flatter, as her own is so frightful. Her waist is absolutely between her shoulders. After showing her attitudes, she sung and I accompanied. Her voice is good and very strong, but she is frequently out of tune; her expression strongly marked and various; but she has no shake, no flexibility and no sweetness. She acts her songs, which I think the last degree of bad taste. All imperfect imitations are disagreeable, and to represent passion with the eyes fixed on a book and the person confined to a spot must always be a poor piece of acting *manqué*. She continues her demonstrations of friendship, and said many fine things about my accompanying her at sight. Still she does not gain upon me. I think her bold, daring, vain even to folly, and stamped with the manners of her first situation much more strongly than one would suppose, after having represented Majesty and lived in good company fifteen years. Her ruling passions seem to me vanity, avarice, and love for the pleasures of the table. She shows a great avidity for presents, and has actually obtained some at Dresden by the common artifice of admiring and longing. Mr. Elliot says, "She will captivate the Prince of Wales, whose mind is as vulgar as her own, and play a great part in England."

As to which, apart from the vulgarity, Nelson agreed with him, and was sorely troubled during the following spring lest she should actually do so. Although he was never tired of extolling her goodness and virtue, the letters which he wrote to her about the Prince of Wales were couched in very unconventional language. And not only did he write to Emma; he wrote also to Hamilton, expostulating with him—it would appear—on the impropriety of admitting the Prince to his table. To which Hamilton replied:—

'A thousand thanks for your kind letter, which I received yesterday and which I immediately committed to the flames; for although I agree perfectly with your Lordship in opinion as to the character of the person who was the chief subject of your letter, I would not have it fall into other hands by any accident.'

It was after the peace of Amiens that the Hamiltons and Nelson lived together in the extraordinary *ménage à trois* which has so often been commented on. At Merton, in London, visiting or travelling, they lived as members of one family, the housekeeping bills being equally divided between Nelson and Hamilton, the cost of Emma, for whose pleasure the chief part of the very large expenditure was incurred, being shared between them. Early in this interval of repose

from active service, Nelson was visited by his old friend, Lord Minto, who wrote:—

‘The whole establishment and way of life is such as to make me angry as well as melancholy; but I cannot alter it, and I do not think myself obliged or at liberty to quarrel with him for his weakness. . . . Lady Hamilton is in high looks but more immense than ever. She goes on cramming Nelson with trowelfuls of flattery, which he goes on taking as quietly as a child does pap. The love she makes to him is not only ridiculous but disgusting.’ *

That the two should keep up the pretence of a pure and platonic affection was a necessity of the situation; but that Nelson’s friends and relations should accept the pretence, that his brother, the Dean of Canterbury, his sisters and their daughters, should pay lengthened visits to Merton, should associate with and correspond with Lady Hamilton on terms of perfect intimacy, cannot but seem most extraordinary. It is almost more so that Hamilton himself accepted it. He was a man who had a large experience of the world, and some—though probably imperfect—knowledge of his wife’s antecedents; yet he could write a few months before his death: ‘I well know the purity of Lord Nelson’s friendship for Emma and me.’ But in fact this purity was non-existent. That Emma was Nelson’s mistress in the ordinary sense of the word; that she was the mother, that Nelson believed himself the father, of Horatia, born on January 29 or 30, 1801, is placed beyond possible doubt by the letters now before us. It appears also that there was another child, born in the end of 1803 or beginning of 1804, of which Nelson wrote on March 18, 1804: ‘Call him what you please; if a girl, Emma. . . . I have been very restless for these several days and nights, and shall not be better till I hear you are quite recovered.’ As no further mention is made of this, it may be supposed that the child was still-born, or died shortly after birth.

The paternity of another bantling, which has also been attributed to Nelson, is now, however, settled otherwise. It is well known that on the night of April 2, 1801, after the battle of Copenhagen, Nelson addressed to Emma a set of verses, which Pettigrew and others have assumed to be his own composition. There is no direct proof that Nelson had the faculty of rhyming in even the smallest degree, and the evidence of the style, as well as the known intimacy, has suggested that the actual author was Lord William Gordon.

This now appears to be the fact. The verses, it will be remembered, begin—

‘From my best cable though I’m forced to part,
I leave my anchor in my angel’s heart’ . . .

But on January 21, 1801—that is, rather more than two months before—Nelson wrote to Emma: ‘Pray send me the ‘last lines wrote by Lord William Gordon, and Henry’s ‘anchor’s fixed in [undecipherable hieroglyphic] heart.’* ‘Henry,’ it may be remarked, was Gordon’s usual rhythmical equivalent for Horatio, and ‘guardian angel’ a frequent synonym for Emma.

On Hamilton’s death in April, 1803, he left to his widow an annuity of 800*l.*, together with a capital sum of 800*l.*, and his plate, pictures, furniture &c. to the value—as estimated by Mr. Jeaffreson—of 5,000*l.* He had hoped, and Emma had hoped, that the Government would give her a pension of at least 500*l.* She had already taught herself to believe that while at Naples or Palermo she had rendered important services to England, and till her death she continued to memorialise the Government concerning them. Nelson, too, attempted, without success, to get her claims recognised; failing which, he himself allowed her 1,200*l.* a year till his death, when she inherited, under his will, an annuity of 500*l.*, a capital sum of 2,000*l.*, and the Merton estate, with the house and furniture, valued at from 12,000*l.* to 14,000*l.*, as well as the interest of 4,000*l.* settled on Horatia. The famous ‘codicil,’ which Nelson signed only a few hours before his death, was duly laid by his brother Earl Nelson—before the First Lord of the Treasury; but this, unluckily for Emma, happened to be Lord Grenville, who, as Foreign Secretary from 1794 to 1800, was the one man in England who could best appreciate her services, and refused to take any action in support of Nelson’s request. It may perhaps be thought that, in any case, Nelson’s last wishes were sacred; that the woman whom Nelson had loved, and had so solemnly entrusted to his country, had a claim far beyond any scruples of a morality tinged, it may be, with the self-esteem of the Pharisee. Still, it must be remembered that both Nelson’s codicil and Emma’s memorials were based solely on her claims to have rendered great public services; that these claims were known to be unfounded; and that, from her husband and paramour, she inherited money and property equivalent to an income of about

* Egerton MS. 1614 The sign, which has some resemblance to Ξ , may perhaps denote ‘angles,’ as a punning cipher for ‘angel’s.’

2,500*l.* a year, which the Government, when considering her memorials—if, indeed, they were not dismissed with contempt—may reasonably have thought sufficient for a woman of her antecedents.

At the time of Nelson's death, however, she owed large sums, apparently gambling debts; and the payment of these, added to reckless and profuse expenditure, quickly ran through the property. Within a little over two years the 2,800*l.* had disappeared, she had raised 10,000*l.* secured on Merton, and she was 8,000*l.* in debt. It is needless to follow the miserable story in its details. Her friends, and especially Nelson's faithful friend Davison, attempted to help her; but to help a woman against herself is impossible, and the attempt proved futile. When the establishment at Merton was broken up she lived for some time at Richmond; in 1810 she was living in Bond Street; in 1813 within the 'rules' of the King's Bench Prison, from which, in the spring of 1814, she escaped by the generous assistance of Alderman Joshua Jonathan Smith, and took refuge at Calais, where, free from the importunity of her creditors, she lived with diminished splendour, but not uncomfortably, on the income arising from Horatia's 4,000*l.* At Calais, in 1814, 200*l.* a year was far removed from poverty, nor does it appear that Emma endured it. There is only one letter of this period, dated September 21, the postscript to which has —

'The best meat here five pence a pound; two quarts of new milk, 2*d.*; fowls, 13*d.*; a couple ducks, the same. We bought two fine turkeys for 4*s.*; an excellent turbot for half a crown, fresh from the sea; partridges, 5*d.* the couple; good Bordeaux wine, white and red, for 15*d.* the bottle, but there are some for 10 sous, halfpence.'

On January 15, 1815, she died. Of her illness, or the circumstances of it, we have no account. It does not seem to have been long or painful. Some time before she had sought consolation and pardon for her sins in the bosom of the Church of Rome. On her deathbed she received the last sacraments according to that communion, and was decently buried in the cemetery at a total cost of 28*l.* 10*s.*, which was defrayed by Mr. Smith. In death, as in life, almost every circumstance respecting her has been persistently misrepresented. The atmosphere of falsehood in which she enveloped herself clung to her even in the grave; but to examine in detail the several misstatements put forward about her during these later years would lead us far beyond all practicable limits of space. With the death of Nelson her career ceases to have any public interest.

ART. VI.—1. *Steam Locomotion upon Common Roads.* By WILLIAM FLETCHER. London: 1891.

2. *The Autocar*, and *The Automobile*. Two weekly journals published respectively in London and Paris.

3. *The Locomotives on Highways Bill*, 1896.

IT is a melancholy reflection that most of the great improvements which have been introduced into the world, whether in religion, science, or art, have at first been received with incredulity and derision. Even those mechanical discoveries which have proved most valuable have not escaped, and almost down to our own days the verdict of the public upon a new invention has been—first, that it will not work, next, that it is too dangerous, and finally, that every one knew it before. The development of mechanical road carriages has offered no exception to these general principles. They were invented towards the close of the last century; they were made completely successful about the year 1857. As soon as there was no doubt that they would work well, they were prohibited as dangerous by an Act passed in 1861. This law, however, permitted them to run at about two-thirds of the speed of a stage coach, and as they still continued to progress towards perfection, a further Act was passed in 1865 which had the effect of rendering their use impossible. For thirty years they were lost sight of; but in 1893 they were again revived by the French and Germans, and having been proved to be neither dangerous nor impossible, they are now recognised as matters of common knowledge, possessing in principle but few features of novelty.

No useful purpose would be served by tracing in detail the series of steps which led from the first crude ideas of early inventors to the more perfect machines of later days. Cugnot in France and Murdoch in England were among the pioneers of the movement. Murdoch, who was at that time one of the foremen in Boulton & Watt's engineering works, was severely blamed by Watt for wasting his employers' time in useless experiments. In France society seems, in the case of Cugnot, to have been irresolute whether to treat him as a malefactor or as a genius. So both plans were adopted. In 1770, after an accident which occurred to a machine which he was driving in Paris, he was sent to the Bastille, from which, however, he was soon afterwards liberated with a pension.

It may seem strange to us now to reflect that one of the

great difficulties which in early days beset the inventors of locomotives, whether for use on road or rail, was to believe it possible to drive a carriage effectively without either pushing or dragging it along. To propel it by placing a machine inside it arranged so as to twist the wheels round appeared altogether an error. This prejudice was no doubt increased by the ill success of the early attempts at velocipedes, and in consequence many primitive machines were provided not only with wheels, but with iron legs and feet, which were designed to push them forward with an action resembling a walking man. By the year 1820 it became recognised that carriages could be propelled by causing the pistons of steam engines to work cranks affixed to their wheels, and in the period between 1820 and 1830 the rail locomotive was perfected.

No idea at first seems to have been entertained of the speeds which would soon be reached. On the hearing of the case for the first railway Bill by a parliamentary committee in 1822, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour was urged as the utmost that could be expected, and a leading periodical which reflected public opinion very accurately, published the following passage in 1825:—

‘As to the persons who speculate in making railways general throughout the kingdom, and superseding all the canals, all the wagons, mail and stage coaches, post-chaises, and, in short, every other mode of conveyance by land and by water, we deem them and their visionary schemes unworthy of notice. . . . It is certainly some consolation to those who are to be whirled at the rate of eighteen or twenty miles an hour by means of a high-pressure engine to be told that they are in no danger of being sea-sick when on shore; . . . but with all these assurances, we should as soon expect the people of Woolwich to suffer themselves to be fired off upon one of Congreve’s ricochet rockets as trust themselves to the mercy of such a machine going at such a rate. . . . We trust that Parliament will, in all the railways which it may sanction, limit the speed to eight or nine miles an hour, which is as great as can be ventured upon with safety.’

The speed fixed by the early railway Bills as a maximum was twelve miles an hour.

The contest between road and rail locomotives which occupied the first thirty years of this century was ultimately terminated by the complete victory of the railways, but road locomotives were pronounced perfectly practicable by a parliamentary committee which sat in 1832. In the year 1834 a road car made by Messrs. Summers & Ogle attained a speed of thirty-two miles an hour, and ran

long distances at an average speed of twenty-four miles an hour. In the same year also, Hancock organised a regular steam-coach service at from twelve to fifteen miles an hour. But these performances were altogether eclipsed on rails. For in 1834 Hackworth, the foreman of George Stephenson's works, whose name will be for ever connected with railways, ran a locomotive on the Stockton and Darlington Railway at fifty miles an hour. It is true that four years afterwards the boiler of this engine burst; but about the same time a road locomotive designed by Scott Russell, who afterwards became celebrated as the designer of the 'Great Eastern' steamship, was overturned, and the boiler burst, and killed five people. This circumstance demonstrates, what without demonstration is sufficiently obvious, that boilers at high pressure and containing large volumes of water may prove very dangerous if they are suddenly subjected to the strain caused by an overthrow.

The complete and decisive superiority of railway locomotives not only in speed, but also in the weights which they could draw and the far smaller consumption of fuel which they required, led after the year 1840 to a temporary cessation of the manufacture of road cars. It is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise, when it is remembered that to drag a weight upon wheels along an ordinary road requires the expenditure of about seven times the energy necessary for an equal load upon rails. But in 1857 fresh interest was aroused in road engines. There were many routes too unimportant to warrant the construction of a railway, and yet sufficiently frequented to require regular coach service. Accordingly, Rickett and others constructed some excellent carriages designed to run at a speed of from twelve to fifteen miles an hour. At this date it may be said that the problem of road-engine locomotion had been solved. Much remained to be done in points of detail, but a possible speed of over thirty miles an hour had been reached, and regular coach services had been run. It is difficult to single out as deserving of special recognition any one name from among the multitude of engineers whose efforts led to the above results. What had been attained had been due rather to a great number of small improvements than to any radical change introduced by a master-mind. But if it be thought necessary to associate any one man with the success of road cars, Hancock will probably be considered to have done more than any other individual. Even at this

day his coach would serve as an excellent point of departure for modern improvements.

No sooner had the possibility of road-engine locomotion been demonstrated, than all the opposition which had been fruitlessly exerted to prevent the developement of railway engines became concentrated upon their unfortunate rivals. They were hooted at; they were refused admission into inns; stones were placed to impede their progress, and holes dug in the roads over which they were to pass. Even the local authorities joined in the attack. Such methods, of course, were insufficient of themselves. The engines were, according to the law as it then stood, perfectly legal, provided they were so run as not to constitute a nuisance. They had been proved to be safe and cheap. It was necessary, therefore, to devise some more effective measures to suppress them. At last it was discovered that they were not subject to the Turnpike Acts, which only related to vehicles drawn by horses. This gave the supporters of horse traffic their opportunity. Although it could not be shown that the coaches were dangerous to life, they were represented as causing the most extraordinary wear upon roads and destruction to bridges; and in 1859 a Bill was introduced imposing heavy tolls upon them. The Bill was in due course referred to a committee, which only examined three witnesses, among whom was the celebrated Mr. Macadam. Mere tolls alone, it was felt, would be easily borne by coaches which could run at half the cost of horse-hire. The report of the committee was somewhat hesitating. There occurred, therefore, a brief period before the first epoch of persecution; but in 1861 the blow fell, and the first Act for regulating the use of locomotives upon common roads was passed. It placed the making of regulations for these vehicles in the hands of a Secretary of State, but provided, in addition, that the tires of the wheels were to be three inches wide, that the engines were to consume their own smoke, that they were to have at least two drivers, and were not to exceed ten miles an hour in the country and five miles an hour in towns. The Act concluded that no locomotive might be used so as to be a nuisance.

This law seemed sufficiently severe. Under it, however, further progress was made, and Fisher and Rickett continued to construct successful coaches. But in 1865 it seems to have been determined to destroy all prospect of ever driving coaches or carriages by steam. The power of a

Secretary of State to make rules was abolished; three persons were required to conduct each locomotive, one of whom was to precede it on foot with a red flag; no whistles were to be sounded, no steam to be blown off. Any person in a carriage drawn by horses had, by merely putting up his hand, a right to require the locomotive to stop. Four miles an hour in the country and two in towns was specified as the maximum speed. Added to this, the name and residence of the owner were to be painted upon it in a conspicuous manner, and the hours during which it might be used in any borough or town were to be subject to the control of the local authority.

The work of legislation was virtually completed in 1878 by additional restrictions upon points of detail. The Act passed in that year enabled local authorities in counties to make bye-laws, as well as those in boroughs, and also conferred upon them the power, which they have liberally exercised, of charging a fee not exceeding 10*l.* for a license to use a locomotive in their counties, to be applied as part of the county rate. By this time the progress of invention had rendered it possible that steam engines would not be the only means of propelling locomotives. Gas engines had been invented, and petroleum engines proposed. Even the prospect of electric traction had dawned. In order, therefore, to prevent the possibility of any of these new powers being tried in road carriages, it was thought expedient to widen the application of the Acts which hitherto had only applied to steam engines. Therefore, in the Act of 1878, a locomotive was defined as 'a locomotive propelled 'by steam or by other than animal power.' Thus armed, the county authorities (which then were the justices of the peace) proceeded vigorously to work. They did not, apparently, consider it necessary to consult any experts, or even to take counsel with one another with a view to common action. The only point upon which they seemed all agreed was to levy in each county the very highest licensing fee which the law would allow.

It is difficult to divine the reasons which, in the present depressed condition of agriculture, induce the local authorities still to maintain these fees. One would have thought their desire would be in every way to encourage the new locomotives. In France, so far from taxing the use of agricultural engines, they are bought at the county expense and loaned out to small farmers. Besides, when carts and carriages paid turnpike tolls, it might have seemed fair to place a tax

upon road locomotives ; but now that roads are toll free, it seems hard that agricultural engines should be exceptionally treated.

The views of the local authorities as to the proper hours during which locomotives ought to be permitted to travel varied very considerably. In Gloucestershire traffic was only allowed at night, the roads being open from 8 in the evening till 4 in the morning. But in the adjoining county of Monmouth it was determined that the only traffic allowed should be by day, the roads being closed from 12 noon till 8 the next morning. This rendered it necessary for a car coming from Gloucestershire to Monmouth to start so as to arrive at the boundary by 4 in the morning, then wait four hours, and then stop again at noon. The car would have to pay a total license of 16*l.* for the two counties, Monmouthshire only requiring a fee of 6*l.* But such moderation was rare. In twenty-six of the counties of England the full license fee of 10*l.* was, and is still, demanded. In only six counties is the fee as low as 5*l.* So that practically, as the law now stands, a person with an autocar who desires to go from London to Newcastle must take out nine separate licenses at a cost of 85*l.* He must take a week at least over the journey. He must procure nine sets of conflicting by-laws, which he must be careful to obey, and his groom must walk in front of him the whole way with a red flag.

Thus perished the nascent industry. From 1865 invention was entirely confined to the manufacture of heavy locomotives, and the promotion of light locomotive carts and carriages practically ceased. It is true that a few spasmodic attempts were made. In 1868 Mr. Knight, an engineer now living, the inventor of the 'Trusty' petroleum engine, made a small carriage, but it was hardly used. In 1881 Sir Thomas Parkyn (who died last year) employed Mr. Bateman (a manufacturer of emery wheels, now living) to construct a steam tricycle. Sir Thomas Parkyn was at once prosecuted ; although his machine emitted no steam and made so little noise that the policeman who gave evidence respecting it was doubtful how it was driven, the magistrate had no option but to enforce the law, and the sentence was ratified by the High Court of Justice. Since the revival last year of road cars, some five or six persons have been punished for using them in different parts of the kingdom. Rarely have the combined efforts of Parliament, the local authority, the magistrates' courts, and the police been exerted with such signal success.

The revival of public interest in autocars commenced in France and Germany. It is very characteristic of the French genius that it has originated a number of adaptations of scientific ideas to practical life which have been completed by other nations. Gramme, a Parisian, developed the dynamo out of Paccinotti's machine while the Germans were encamped around Paris. Faure first showed the practicability of accumulators; and to French ingenuity we owe the bicycle. The machines used in France in 1893 were, as a rule, German petroleum engines fixed into French carriages. About the same time several of them were tried in Berlin. But the first great impetus to the movement was given by the race in the summer of 1894, from Paris to Rouen, organised by the proprietors of 'Le Petit Journal.' After several days wisely spent in preliminary trials, to accustom the drivers of the vehicles to the rules of the competition, the race came off on Sunday, July 22. Amid a large concourse of spectators, on a bright summer morning, the line of carriages placed themselves in order, five yards one behind the other, at the Porte Maillot. By eight o'clock nineteen competitors had arrived and were in line, and were started with a break containing the jury, and enveloped by a crowd of cyclists and persons on foot. Most of the cars were driven by petroleum engines, but there were several steam carriages. The day was exceedingly hot, and the road covered with the thick white dust which travellers in France know so well. It was observed that only one of the horses encountered on the route appeared frightened by the procession of cars, which must have afforded a scene truly characteristic of that light-hearted nation which can make a festival out of a trial of engineering. The mayors of the villages through which they passed fired off cannon, and the houses were adorned with flags. Proprietors of fruit gardens appeared with baskets of apricots to refresh the engine drivers. Seventeen of the carriages arrived at Rouen, a distance of seventy-nine miles, in times varying from eight to thirteen and a half hours. The first to arrive was driven by steam, but the first prize was divided between two carriages driven by the Daimler petroleum motor. The greatest speed attained by any carriage was about eighteen miles an hour. Seven dogs were run over on the route, one lady cyclist injured, and one of the boilers burst.

In the next year (1895) it was determined by 'Le Petit Journal' to organise another race on a larger scale. This time the course arranged was from Paris to Bordeaux and

back, a distance of 744 miles. Sixteen petroleum carriages, seven steam vehicles, two electric carriages, and two petroleum bicycles started. The first four carriages that came in were driven by petroleum motors; the shortest time taken was 48 hours 47 minutes, not counting stoppages, being an average of almost fifteen miles an hour. This was a great improvement in speed on the race of the previous year. Last autumn a race took place upon a 100-mile course near Chicago. A number of carriages entered, but not many came up to the post. The winning one was a French petroleum carriage.

It is to be regretted that the American press tolerates at present in its columns an exaggeration of which the best Americans are ashamed. The most absurd accounts have reached this country of machines which would go over sixty miles an hour on roads, of carriages driven by compressed springs wound up at starting, of absurdly light accumulators which never are produced, and of marvellous gas engines which automatically cool themselves. No one can doubt that in the future the nation which produces the best and most ingenious steel tools in the world will play a worthy part in the developement of any mechanical invention, however difficult; meanwhile America is too great a nation in mechanics to have need of all this silly bombast, which only obscures, not enhances, her great reputation for engineering skill.

Another competition has been arranged for this year in France, organised by the members of the Automobile Club. The editors of an English mechanical journal, 'Engineering,' are also to award prizes amounting to 1,000*l.* for the best carriages. They have already issued notice of the conditions of the competition. It is to be regretted that they have totally forbidden the use of light petroleum spirit, restricting petroleum engines to those which use heavy oil. There can be no doubt, as will presently be shown, that heavy oil carriages are preferable on the score of safety to those propelled by spirit, but it is perhaps a pity that some one of the prizes was not left open to light petroleum motors. By this action all chance of comparing the two is destroyed. A somewhat capricious rule has also been made, that speed over ten miles an hour is not to count at all. So that there can be no true race in any sense of the term, for it may be safely predicted that every carriage that enters for the race at all will go at a greater pace. Although, as will presently be shown, there is no such thing yet in existence as a really perfect carriage, the problem

has been solved, and it may with certainty be predicted that ere long these cars will be common in our streets.

It is now time to give some description of the different genera into which motor cars may be divided. Those which have hitherto been the most successful are driven by small engines fixed either under the seat or in front. They all have either three or four wheels. The apparatus consists of one or more cylinders, the pistons of which are driven, not by steam, but by the explosion of a small quantity of the vapour of petroleum. It is, of course, well known that all carbonaceous inflammable gases become explosive when mixed with air, and therefore at each alternate stroke a small quantity of air and carbon vapour is introduced into the cylinder and exploded at the right instant. This seems at first sight likely to be a very dangerous proceeding; but in practice there is no danger attendant on it, and the force of the explosion being all converted into work, there is no energy left to be expended in making a noise. The explosions, therefore, are quite silent. The cylinders by virtue of these explosions become heated, and require jackets of water to cool them. This is a great disadvantage, because a heavy tank of water, containing about ten gallons, must be carried in the carriage, and must be replenished with cold water from time to time upon the road. The fuel used is either what is known as petroleum spirit—that is to say, light petroleum, or ‘benzoline,’ or else the heavy oil which is burnt in ordinary paraffin lamps, called petroleum oil. The advantage of the former is that it is clean, it does not clog the engine with soot, it contains great working power in a small bulk; and, being volatile, the smell of it soon passes off. Any one who has used a carriage or launch driven by petroleum spirit, and also one driven by heavy oil, will easily recognise these advantages.

But all petroleum motors have grave inconveniences. In practice, the proper operation of these engines, and the due ignition of the mixture of vapour and air above mentioned, depend upon the uniformity and regularity of the speed at which they are driven. They do not admit of great changes of velocity. Hence, therefore, in order to adapt them to carriages it is necessary to have some means of varying the speed of the carriage, while that of the engine remains constant. This, as is well known, is very difficult to accomplish for machinery doing work at high speeds. Cogwheels are apt to clank and jar when thrown in and out of gear, bands upon cones slip and break; so

that it is not very easy rapidly to alter the speed of the vehicle.

Again, the high speed of the motors, say from 200 to 400 revolutions per minute, causes great vibration, and in all the carriages of this type hitherto made the whole frame trembles, and when they are standing still, the wheels being disengaged from the engines, the vibration is most unpleasant. To get rid of vibration when in motion it is expedient that the engines should be what is termed 'well balanced'—that is to say, arranged so that each rapid movement of any part is exactly counterpoised by an equal movement of an equally heavy part in the opposite direction. It is also desirable that the vibration should be horizontal, because when it is vertical it jumps directly upon the springs of the carriage, which are much more sensitive to vertical than to horizontal shocks.

There is also a further disadvantage in that petroleum engines will not start themselves. In order to start them it is necessary, just as in the case of gas engines, to get down and turn a handle rapidly round for a few times; so that if it be desired to stop the carriage without descending, this can only be done by disconnecting the wheels from the engine by a lever, and letting the engines run, doing as little work as possible, but what they do being turned into heat, or noise and vibration. Thus, when a short stoppage is made, and it is not worth while to stop the engine, it is left running, but disconnected from the wheels. All its work is therefore turned into shaking the carriage. To prevent this the best method is to give it some work to do, such as rubbing against a break. But this disadvantage will be surmounted. Several admirable inventions have been made for starting gas engines, and before long there is no doubt that they will be applied to autocars.

In those which employ petroleum spirit there is a further disadvantage, which amounts to a positive danger. Not only does benzine take fire when a match is put to it, but even when a light is brought near its vapour. So that any spilling of the liquid on the floor renders the whole building in which it is liable to be set on fire. Indeed, the vapour of petroleum spirit has been known to roll along the floor, and form a train of vapour, by which the spirit is ignited by a light a considerable distance away; * and when it burns the

* In 1877 the Regent's Park explosion was caused by a current of vapour, which escaped from some barrels of benzoline on a barge and

violence of its combustion is excessive. It has been found by experiment that one volume of petroleum spirit will evaporate into 141 volumes of vapour, which are capable of rendering 5,000 volumes of air strongly explosive, and more than three times that quantity inflammable. So dangerous is this spirit that its use is regulated by two Acts of Parliament, by which no petroleum spirit can be kept without a license, unless it is under three gallons in quantity, and kept in separate stoppered vessels containing each not more than one pint. Of course these regulations, unless they are repealed, would entirely prevent the use for autocars of engines in which petroleum spirit is employed. On the other hand, petroleum oil is not under any statutory restrictions.

When steam is talked of for driving road cars, there naturally rises to the mind an idea of a boiler with more or fewer tubes in it, filled with water, the vapour of which, when it has done its work in a small pair of cylinders, would be allowed to escape into the air. But such a contrivance would be altogether out of place in a carriage. The only boilers permissible there would be of an entirely different type. Instead of a receptacle for water, we must conceive of a network of small tubes with no water space at all. When the engine is required to start, these tubes are heated almost to a low red heat, no water being in them. If a drop of water is now introduced into the hot coils, it will at once be converted into highly heated steam, and the engines will make a few rotations. If no more water were added they would stop, but by the carefully regulated introduction of drop after drop into the boiler just so much steam is produced as is needful. The pace may be made slow or quick, and if the engines are compound there will be no snorting noise from the exhaust and but little vibration. The fire can be a furnace burning gas produced from the vapour of petroleum. This sounds a tempting solution of the difficulty. No water is required to cool the cylinders, and there is no likelihood of the engine stopping. But there are other drawbacks. If the steam were allowed to escape into the air, not only would dense clouds of white vapour be produced, but the water-

reached a fireplace on the barge 35 feet off. It was thus ignited, and the flame rushed back to the barrels, which caught fire, and caused five tons of gunpowder to explode. Several explosions in ships have also been occasioned by the leakage of vapour from barrels of paint made up with naphtha.

supply would soon be exhausted. This can be prevented by arranging apparatus for condensing the steam into water again, and putting it back into the boiler. Unfortunately it is not easy to design a condensing apparatus of a sufficiently small size to be carried in a road car. A large quantity of water and a large extent of cooling surface are required. The invention of a good condenser of small size and of little weight is wanted before steam autocars can be made completely successful. In order to reduce the size of the condenser, and at the same time to cause less loss of heat, petroleum spirit has been successfully employed in the boilers, so that the vapour of benzine replaces steam. The furnace may be fed with petroleum oil, and thus be less dangerous. It has been also proposed to drive carriages with a carbonic acid gas engine, in which carbonic acid is used instead of steam.

This whole subject is full of interest. Mr. Maxim, in his extraordinary flying machine, has shown that a steam-engine, boiler and all, can be made which will give one-horse power for every eleven pounds of weight. This engine is far lighter than would be needed for an autocar; but of course the rapid rush through the air would cool his condenser in a way that would be hopeless in a road carriage, and hence, if his engine were applied to road traction, far larger condensers would have to be added, which would considerably increase the weight. The difficulty of obtaining a metal which will bear heating to the temperature sufficient to work the boilers above described has not yet been entirely surmounted. Upon the whole it may be safely pronounced that we have not heard the last of steam for motor carriages, and that the problem of adapting them to this use presents no features of very exceptional difficulty.

We must next turn to electricity. Energy can, of course, not be originated: it can only be transformed. The energy of all electrical engines is obtained from coal, and thus indirectly from the rays of the sun in prehistoric times. As, however, it would be impossible, or hardly practicable, to carry with the carriages the engines necessary to convert the heat into electricity, some means must be found of storing or bottling up the electricity. This is done by causing it to flow into large plates of lead immersed in dilute sulphuric acid. These are called 'accumulators,' or 'storage batteries.' Each pound of the lead is capable of absorbing the energy that one horse can put out in about twenty seconds, and therefore, if we wish to store up a horse-power to last, say, for

eight hours, we must have about 1,440 lb. of lead. Whence, then, in practice a four-wheeled carriage ought not to have less than about a ton of accumulators in addition to the dynamo. This is a considerable weight; and if 600 lb. is put down for the carriage, 600 lb. for the dynamo, and 800 lb. for four passengers and their luggage, we should obtain a vehicle just weighing two tons, and capable of exerting practically about two-horse power for six or seven hours. It is calculated that for ordinary carriages about half a ton is the maximum weight that should be put upon each of the ordinary wheels with $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch tires; but two-horse power would be fully required to drag a two-ton carriage at any reasonable speed over a fairly rough road. Hence, then, it is clear that the weight of accumulators is a great obstacle to their use. When, however, this has been overcome the advantage of electrical carriages will be very great. They will be quite free from vibration, from smell, and from danger. They will want no attention; they can be stopped and started at pleasure. It will require some new arrangements to enable their speed to be varied, but there seems no reasonable doubt that a dynamo can be contrived which, by suitable arrangements of switches, can be made to vary its speed at pleasure.

Here, then, we have the interesting spectacle of three forms of engine, moved by petroleum, steam, and electricity, about to compete in the solution of the problem of driving a carriage which shall be manageable, safe, economical, and comfortable. By none of them has the feat been yet accomplished; but each of these three competitors seems to have about an equal chance of success.

Up to the present time the engines which have succeeded the best are the Daimler and Benz petroleum engines; but they leave much to be desired, and will in time, no doubt, be superseded by far better ones. So far as a forecast can be made, it seems probable that some form of petroleum engine will eventually be the most successful.

There is much to criticise in all the carriages which have been hitherto constructed. In order to be economically made the wheels, frame, and engines should be uniform in pattern, and capable of being mounted with a brougham, victoria, or phaeton, as required—nay more, these tops should be interchangeable. But at present the engines are fitted into the well or boot of a vehicle by being attached to the woodwork. Not all of them have as yet been furnished with pneumatic tires, which in course of time will

be fitted to all carriages designed for pleasure. It may seem somewhat difficult to see why a pneumatic tire to a wheel produces ease of draught as well as comfort. The fact can easily be proved by letting a bicycle wheel with a pneumatic tire run down a hill in competition with a wheel with an iron tire. The true reason is to be found in the fact that when an ordinary wheel goes over stones, at each jolt the axle is raised a short distance and bumped down again. If there are no springs, and the weight on the wheel is half a ton, and the stones over which it jolts are only one eighth of an inch high, we should thus lose about one hundred and twenty-five foot-pounds at every bump, and five such bumps every second on each of four wheels would absorb a horse-power. In a carriage with springs, inasmuch as only the wheel would jump, but the body remain nearly still, the loss of power would be far less; whence well-hung carriages are easier to draw, as well as easy to drive in. But with a pneumatic tire not even the wheel would be caused to rise. The only effect would be the indentation of the rim, and thus the waste of energy would be a minimum. We may therefore anticipate the universal use of pneumatic tires for the new carriages.

It is always rash to forecast the future of a new invention. Nevertheless, it may be of some interest to endeavour to form an estimate of the future use of motor cars, and of the changes to which that use may give rise. In the first place, it will be curious to observe which out of the many hideous names that have been proposed will survive. Cycles began with the pompous name, 'velocipede,' but have ended in the slang 'bike.' The Americans call cars that are driven by electricity 'electrolats,' and for the others we may apparently take our choice of 'horseless carriage,' 'automobile,' 'autocar,' 'motor car,' 'road car,' 'road locomotive,' and 'engine carriage.' The last appears perhaps the most euphonious, and can be separated into genera by the use of the words 'engine cart' and 'engine cab.' It must, however, be admitted that our choice is a choice of evils.

Passing, however, from the name to the probable cost, it may be estimated that the price of a good engine carriage will be about the same as that of a corresponding carriage, horse, and harness. And it is probable that the repairs, painting, and lubrication of the engine will nearly correspond with the repairs and minor expenses attendant upon a carriage and horse. The stabling will be less, but the driver will probably be paid about the same wage as a

coachman. There remains, then, only the comparison of the provender and litter of a horse with the consumption of oil of the car. A horse's provender will cost about 1*l.* a week. Suppose we estimate the average day's work of the horse at twenty miles, then the week's work of six days would be 120 miles, which would work out at 2*d.* a mile. The corresponding cost of a petroleum motor of 2½ horse-power would, however, be only ½*d.* a mile—that is to say, one-fourth of the cost of the horse. Two other advantages also remain. For the care of a horse and carriage requires special skill, whereas any servant would very soon learn how to clean and drive an engine carriage. Besides, the horse must be fed whether he works or not, whereas the engine carriage may be put away for any period. For speed and endurance the engine carriage has the advantage. Years ago, as has been mentioned, a carriage was driven by steam on a road at a rate nearly double that which a horse can attain. And as the length of an engine carriage will be about half that of a horse and carriage, its powers of turning will be much greater. It will not kick nor run away; it can be left to mind itself in the road; and if it breaks a part, a new one can be immediately procured to replace it. Besides, an engine carriage will easily run a hundred miles in seven or eight hours, which no horse could accomplish. Hence we may anticipate that within a measurable interval of time engine carts will replace the huge vans which are now seen everywhere in London, and that our hackney cabs will be replaced by engine cabs. This will probably bring about sixpenny fares.

A service of automobile cabs has been organised in Paris, but has not yet come into use. If a similar project is started in London, it is to be hoped that the company which promotes it will take pains not only to secure a fair day's wage to their men, but to punish them for making overcharges. There is no doubt that the systematic action of some cabmen in regularly demanding more than their fares, in never having change, and in refusing to say what they claim, has seriously injured the trade. If in a new engine-cab company the owners undertook to refund all cases of proved overcharge and to prosecute the men, and took pains to ensure cleanliness and civility, there is good reason to anticipate a success for them. Nor could the drivers of horse cabs retaliate. If a horse cab drove into an engine cab, the question of weight would settle the matter, and it would be 'a bad look-out for the cab.'

It is usually estimated that of the wear and tear of vehicles upon roads, 60 per cent. is due to the hoofs of the horses, and 40 per cent. to the action of the wheels. Hence, if engine carriages are adopted we might expect to see the disappearance of half such part of the mud of our streets as is composed of disintegrated stone, and all that part of it which is composed of horsedung. But if pneumatic tires are largely used, there is no reason why any mud should exist at all, or any of the poisonous summer dust which engenders throat disease.

It seems to be generally admitted that the heavy fall in value which has taken place in the better-class houses in the West End of London is due to a growing desire to make the chief home in the country. A country home and a flat in London is becoming the ideal of many of those whom business or pleasure compels to reside in the capital. This movement is partly the result of the breaking-up of London society into many sections. It is partly due to the very great increase of rates, and the feeling of insecurity produced by the prospect of vast increase in the future; partly also to the great increase in the cost of building. This exodus will probably be facilitated and accelerated by engine carriages. It is often difficult to arrange for a train to take a man from his office at any hour. He may first have to traverse a considerable distance in a cab, and then there may only be a few trains available. But with an autocar the ordinary pace of which is fifteen miles an hour, and which on emergencies could go much faster, he will be able to start when he pleases, and the vehicle during the day will easily find standing-room in some court or yard. It will take him to his door, instead of, like a train, only to the nearest station. By the aid of engine carriages many places in the country round London will become available for residence which are at present inaccessible owing to the imperfection of the train service. As to speed, although an average of more than fifteen miles per hour will not be often used, it will be quite possible even to attain a speed of thirty miles an hour upon a vehicle provided with large pneumatic tires, which will bowl along the roads like an indiarubber ball, instead of jolting over every pebble.

The great demand which there will be for these carriages, especially for use as tradesmen's carts, may be expected to develop an industry quite as important as the cycle trade. This will inevitably engender the usual crop of companies and company-promoters, and it is not improbable that a bubble

movement may take place similar to that which succeeded the invention of incandescent electric lamps. Those who are wise will recollect that in the matter of gas engines there is really no master-patent, as there was in the case of the telephone or the electric lamp, and no subsidiary patent worth any considerable sum of money. The company which is most likely to succeed is that which starts free from all patents, and prepared to work on license any that come into the market. But to agree to give a large sum of money for the use even of a good patent, in the present state of knowledge, is almost sure to lead to financial disaster. In the present depressed state of the money-market, where investments yielding 4 per cent. are eagerly sought for, it is only natural to expect that gambling will take place, and safe to prophesy that large sums of money will soon be paid for patents or patent rights which are quite worthless.

The principal centre of the new trade will probably be Coventry or some other Midland town. It is rather surprising that the cycle trade has not made more progress in London. The cost of bringing the materials to town is not very large, and the proportionate quantity of iron and coal used in manufacture is not very considerable. Hence there is no special reason why the factories should be close to the coal and iron mines. A leading promoter of a new company which is being formed to manufacture engine carriages, when asked if he intended to come to London, replied in the negative, alleging as a reason that the London workmen were entirely demoralised, and could not be depended on to work steadily. We should be inclined to question the truth of this remark, and it is to be regretted that such an idea should have taken root; for it seems certain that no new trades are coming to London, while many of those which demand special skill are leaving it.

One of the most important applications of the new machines will be in the opportunities they will give of bringing agricultural produce and market-garden produce rapidly and certainly to market. So useful will they be in this respect, that in many instances they will serve the purpose of light railways.

The above considerations led Mr. Shaw Lefevre, the President of the Local Government Board during the term of office of the late Liberal Government, to bring in a Bill for making the use of engine carriages legal. The present President of the Local Government Board was no sooner in office than he also turned his attention to light locomotives,

and a Bill is to be introduced into Parliament dealing with the subject. The Bill proposed by Mr. Shaw Lefevre was designed to enable local authorities to make rules for the use of light road locomotives. It may, however, be questioned whether the local authorities would have been able to take such united action as is necessary in the case of carriages which are to be used all over the kingdom. So long as the effect of any legislation is confined within the area of a county, the County Council may be trusted to cope with it. Upon such questions as local sanitation, or county improvements, or the care of the poor, no body can be so fit to lay down rules as the representatives of the locality in which the improvements are to be made or the unions governed. But when questions arise of a wider scope than these which merely concern the county, a legislation of a wider character is required. Carriages are designed not to be used in one county only, but to move from place to place. Any vexatious or unreasonable law made by one county may affect the comfort of all those which surround it, and it would be almost as reasonable to enable counties to determine what ships should enter their harbours as to decide upon what sorts of wagons or carts might go along their roads. It is, therefore, much to be desired that whatever rules are to be made upon this subject should be made by a single central authority, which will place all parts of the kingdom upon the same footing, only permitting such local variations as the special nature of particular places requires. It is quite impossible in the present state of our knowledge to say what the rules will have to be. If the public is careful and reasonable, probably but little restriction will be needful; but if the passing of an Act to permit the use of mechanical carriages is immediately to call into existence a number of what in vulgar language are known as 'scorchers,' determined to tear along the roads at thirty miles an hour, with no proper safety-valves to the boilers, reckless whether or no they terrify horses and run over children, provided with no numbers, and only intent upon escape as soon as they have caused an accident, then stringent regulations may become necessary.

The extraordinary speed which these carriages will attain, the fun to be obtained from the risk of running at a high speed, will probably lead to some scenes of road racing which will quite extinguish everything that has been attempted by cycles. There would, perhaps, be no particular reason for stopping these races if only the safety of the

drivers were concerned. It is no more dangerous than hunting, and not so dangerous as steeplechasing, and may be made quite as exciting as either. But in the interests of those quiet folk who like to drive a pony carriage without being overturned by a runaway engine car, it will be probably needful to devise some regulations to prevent the use of machines not properly provided with safe apparatus. Again, all petroleum engines make the most smell when they are stopped; and therefore on a hot summer's day, when there is no wind, it is probable that a large number of autocars proceeding at a slow pace in a crowded street would make the air quite unbearable with the odour of paraffin. Besides, the use of petroleum spirit would be a source of danger to the houses surrounding the place in which it was kept and the tanks of the engine carriages were filled. Not only would the insurance rate for such a building itself be raised, but an increase would be made in the insurance rate of all its neighbours.

These considerations, coupled with the fact that, according to the existing law, petroleum spirit cannot be used in autocars at all, point to the necessity of some authority being empowered to frame from time to time regulations for the use of inflammable liquids. It is impossible to frame them at present—our knowledge is not sufficient; but as invention progresses there will be no difficulty in bringing into shape a set of rules which shall allow the utmost latitude compatible with public safety.

It is not desirable to fetter this new invention by hard and fast rules as to speed which are not applied to other vehicles. The Act which has just been introduced into the House of Lords removes light locomotives which weigh less than ten tons, and are not used for drawing any other vehicle, altogether from the operation of the Locomotives Acts. They need therefore pay no tax, except the ordinary carriage duty; nor are they subject to any of the restrictions which have been above enumerated. They are exactly on the same footing as carriages and carts drawn by horses. They must be so constructed as not to emit smoke or visible vapour; and it is further enacted that if any one negligently drives them, or suffers them to be without due control, he shall forfeit 2*l.* With regard to the use of liquid and other fuel, they are subject to regulations which will be framed in that department of the Home Office which deals with the Petroleum Acts. It cannot be said of this Act that it is not framed in a wide and generous spirit; and under it

there will be the most ample scope for improvements. It is not to be expected that these engine carriages will at once be perfected. They are certainly not beautiful at present; they will probably remain as ugly as cycles and other sorts of machinery usually are; but in time they will be greatly improved. In the early days of railways a writer in a pamphlet called the 'Fingerpost' said:

'I must ask the traveller to indulge his imagination with an excursion some twenty or thirty years forward in the regions of time, when the dark, unsightly, shapeless machine that now offends him, even in idea, shall be metamorphosed into one of exquisite symmetry and beauty, glittering with all the pomp and circumstance the pride of wealth knows so well how to bestow—a machine that may regale his nostrils with exhalations, not from pit coal and train oil, but from some more genial produce of the earth, and last, but not least, may minister to his palate in a style somewhat superior to the comforts enjoyed by a mail-coach dinner-party in 1825.'

More than seventy years have passed since this was written. Engines still remain almost, if not quite, as ugly as in the days of the 'Rocket,' and we have not yet seen them perfumed with automatic scent-diffusers. The ecstatic hopes of the author appear to be still unfulfilled, except as regards his prophetic vision of a dinner in a Pullman car. But had this writer been told that by means of engines he would be enabled to dine in London and breakfast the next morning in Edinburgh, or to go in less than five days from England to Constantinople, he would have considered it as improbable as we now consider the prospects of travelling with flying machines. It is very difficult to forecast the future. All, perhaps, that can be prophesied with confidence is, that as soon as the use of engine cars has been rendered legal, progression along common roads will be improved to an extent that only those who have studied the subject consider credible.

AET. VII.—*The History of English Law before the Time of Edward I.* By Sir FREDERICK POLLOCK, Bart., M.A., LL.D., Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Oxford, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-law, and FREDERIC WILLIAM MAITLAND, LL.D., Downing Professor of the Laws of England in the University of Cambridge, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-law. In 2 vols. Cambridge: 1895.

THE form and growth of English law is, and always has been, unsymmetrical; it is, indeed, conspicuously characteristic of the whole growth of English political and social institutions. Equally also a scientific investigation and study of it have always been noticeably absent in this country, and without exaggeration it may be said that the late Sir FitzJames Stephen's 'History of the Criminal Law' was the first real attempt to treat a substantial portion of the subject in the modern historical manner—that is to say, to investigate facts with the care and patience which have characterised the researches of scientific men during the present century. Previous writers based theories on very insufficient evidence, with the result that many unwarranted conclusions have been accepted as true, and that in many respects the accepted knowledge of English law has been alike imperfect and false. In no small degree this has arisen from a lack of material; various 'sources of knowledge' have been published for the first time since 1800 by the 'Record Commissioners or in the Rolls Series, or by some 'learned society, the Camden or the Surtees, the Pipe Roll 'or the Selden.' The result of these publications, which in the domain of law are analogous to such materials in the more purely historical field as the so-called reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, has been to lay before the competent student a great mass of raw material, often confused and often imperfect, but which, when properly sifted, has proved of the greatest value. These opportunities have arisen when the marked advance in the manner of historical study in this country, not to speak of the scientific investigations on the Continent into the mediæval law of Europe and England, was certain within no long time to produce a similar study of English law in this country. The first large and comprehensive result has now been seen in the remarkable 'History of English Law before the Time of Edward I.,' for which, as the Preface states, we are chiefly

indebted to Mr. F. W. Maitland. The publication of the work distinctly marks a new era in our legal literature. It places the study of English law on the same footing as that of our history or our literature; it gives us a comprehensive and, so far as it is possible, an accurate account of the history of English law to a point which marks the end of one era and the beginning of another.

Up to this time English law had not existed: there had been Anglo-Saxon, Danish, Norman, and Roman law. There had been Norman and ecclesiastical and Roman influences at work. By the year 1272 English law, as we now understand it, had attained a definite shape; numerous changes, as well in its substance as its form, thereafter occurred from century to century; but we witness from this date not so much the gradual creation of a national law, and judiciary, which is the characteristic feature of the earlier period, as the alterations co-extensive with the growth of England of a particular and definite system. Metaphorically from this time the various streams from different sources are united into one, which, widening, varying in aspect, broken in the one place and diverted in another, has yet unmistakably one great and complete individuality. The metaphor, it is true, must not be pressed too far; it must not be supposed that English law from the time of Edward I. contained streams themselves clearly defined at that date, but it is a mixture of several systems, each being gradually modified during the course of time. 'The picture,' write the authors of the work,

'of two streams of law meeting to form one river would deceive us, even could we measure the volume and analyse the waters of each of these fancied streams. The law which prevails in the England of the twelfth century—this one thing we may say with some certainty—cannot be called a mixture of the law which prevailed in England on the day when the Confessor was alive and dead, with the law which prevailed in Normandy on the day when William set sail from Saint Valery. Nor can we liken it to a chemical compound which is the result of a combination of these two elements. Other elements which are not racial have gone to its making. Hardly have Normans and Englishmen been brought into contact, before Norman barons rebel against their Norman lord, and the divergence between the interests of the king and the interests of the great feudatories becomes as potent a cause of legal phenomena as any old English or old Frankish traditions can be. Nor, to take but one other example, dare we neglect, if we are to be true to our facts, the personal characters of the great men who accomplished the subjection of England, the characters of William and Lanfranc. The effects, even the legal effects, of a Norman conquest of England would assuredly have been very different

from what they were, had the invading host been led by a Robert Curthose. And in order to notice just one more of the hundred forces which play upon our legal history, we have but to suppose that the Conqueror instead of leaving three sons had left one only, and to ask whether in that case a charter of liberties would ever have been granted in England. We have not to speak here of all these causes; they do not come within the history of law; only we must protest against the too common assumption, that the English law of later times must in some sort be just a mixture, or a compound, of two old national laws.' (Vol. i. p. 58.)

This protest is necessary as against a too stringent application of the metaphor, but with the qualification to be found in the passage which we have quoted it makes the character of the early growth of our law more comprehensible.

It will be our endeavour to show, by reference to some few parts of the subject of this book, how the authors of this work have depicted the gradual growth, as well as the main characteristics, of English law to the time at which their history ceases. But one cardinal point needs at the outset to be emphasised, and that is the connexion of the law with the political and social state of the country. Nothing has tended more to divert men from a study of English law than the regarding it as a separate science; for it can never be properly studied unless it is considered in its relations to the nation generally and the national life. Law in some way is constantly affecting the daily affairs of each member of the community, and yet there is no subject which has been considered in a more detached manner and without reference to its social or political effects.

The means of attaining justice are of the highest importance in every community, and we may therefore at once direct our attention to the subject of judicial institutions. Of Anglo-Saxon law the evidence is necessarily obscure, and in such a state of society as existed in England prior to the Norman Conquest elaborate institutions of any kind are not to be expected. But, on the other hand, there may exist in rude communities a simplicity which may well be the envy of more advanced societies. And this was the case in the England of the Anglo-Saxons. The ordinary courts of public justice

'were the county court and the hundred court, of which the county court was appointed to be held twice a year, the hundred every four weeks. Poor and rich men alike were entitled to have right done to them, though the need of emphasising this elementary point of law

in the third quarter of the tenth century suggests that the fact was often otherwise.' (Vol. i. p. 18.)

We should be wrong, however, if we allowed our ideas of courts of law in modern times to govern our minds in regard to those of such a primitive time as the tenth century. The courts were then held in the open air. Of their procedure we know nothing; indeed, procedure scarcely existed. The judges were, of course, the leading men of the county and the hundred respectively: there was the ealdorman; the bishop too sat in the county court, since the Church claimed for him a large share in the direction of even secular justice. Probably the bishop was often the only member of the court who possessed any learning or any systematic training in public affairs. The means of enforcing judgements were rude; the subjects of these judgements were offences and wrongs common in every simple state of society—homicide, theft, more especially cattle-stealing. 'The law of contract is so rudimentary as barely to be distinguishable from the law of property.' In later years above and below the local courts are the king's courts and the private courts of lords, spiritual and temporal, of various degree. Of the latter next to nothing is to be seen in Anglo-Saxon times. That there were rights of private jurisdiction is a matter of surmise rather than of proof. It is possible, it may even be probable, that to a limited extent they existed before the Conquest. It is sufficient, however, to assume such a possibility from subsequent facts without direct evidence at an earlier date.

Of the preservation of the peace, and of the punishment of offences by the king, there is just as little evidence as of private jurisdictions; but that it existed is nevertheless not a matter of doubt, though the extent of it is unknown. But what we have to bear in mind is that in these early times 'the king's peace' does not represent a general royal jurisdiction. The phrase comes from a time 'when the king's protection was not universal but particular, when the king's peace was not for all men or all places. Breach of the king's peace was an act of personal disobedience, and a much graver matter than an ordinary breach of public order: it made the wrongdoer the king's enemy.' There was a sanctity belonging to the king's house, arising from the greater respect which attached to him. His attendants and those over whom he threw his protection were entitled to be kept from hurt by means of

his authority. Thus the particular protection of the early king grew into the general jurisdiction of later monarchs.

When we reach the times of the Norman and the Angevin kings we are on both firmer and more interesting ground. The jurisdiction of the king, however, to which we have just referred, was long in forming itself into what we call courts of law under the Norman kings. 'The king's justice was 'still extraordinary; the local courts were those to which 'men went; the king's court was not in permanent session.'

'Under the two Williams the name *curia Regis* seems to be borne only by those great assemblages that collect round the king thrice a year when he wears his crown, on the great festivals of the Church. It was in such assemblages that the king's justice was done under his own eye, and no doubt he got his way; still it was not for him to make the judgements of his court. Under Henry I. something that is more like a permanent tribunal, a group of justiciars presided over by a chief justiciar, becomes apparent. Twice a year this group, taking the name of "the exchequer," sat round the chequered table, received the royal revenue, audited the sheriffs' accounts, and did incidental justice. From time to time some of its members would be sent through the counties to hear the pleas of the crown, and litigants who were great men began to find it worth their while to bring their cases before this powerful tribunal. We cannot say that these justiciars were professionally learned in English law: but the king chose for the work trusty barons and able clerks, and some of these clerks, besides having long experience as financiers and administrators, must have known at least a little of the new canonical jurisprudence. But for all this when Henry died little had yet been done towards centralising in one small body of learned men the whole work of justice.' (Vol. i. p. 86.)

We have to go forward for more than half a century before we can really find national and recognised courts of justice; for it is in what the authors of this new history of English law term, perhaps a little fancifully, the age of Glanville—in other words, in the reign of Henry II.—that the system of English justice becomes visible in distinct and clearly defined forms. Glanville was, indeed, a conspicuous figure in the reign of Henry II., but it is doubtful if he wrote the book—'A Tréatise on the Laws and Customs of 'England, composed in the time of Henry the Second, while 'the Honourable Ranulph Glanvill held the Helm of Justice'—which is associated with his name. Indeed, the probabilities are in favour of the work being that of some clerk who had followed Glanville's decisions, rather than of a man who was a statesman and a soldier, as well as a lawyer—if lawyer even a chief justice may be called in the twelfth century. Glanville came of an old Suffolk family. In 1163

he was made sheriff of Yorkshire; eleven years later, being then sheriff of Lancashire, he defeated the Scots near Alnwick, capturing their king. 'From that time forward ' he was a prominent man, high in the King's favour, a ' man to be employed as general, ambassador, judge, and ' sheriff. In 1180 he became chief justiciar of England— ' prime minister, we may say, and viceroy.' He went with Richard to the crusades, and died at Acre in 1190. The book which has been called after him seems to have been composed before the death of Henry. It is in the highest degree improbable that a man with the various high duties which were cast on Glanville would have the time, even if he had the inclination, to carry out a task more fitted for the scholar and the clerk than the man of action and the judge. On the other hand, nothing can be more likely than that some competent secretary or clerk should associate such a book with the name of his master—'cujus sapientia ' conditæ sunt leges subscriptæ,' says Hoveden. That legal wisdom it would be the natural desire of an industrious subordinate to perpetuate. And some one has done so, giving us a notable landmark in the history of English law, in a book in which we see procedure and substantial law gradually shaping themselves out of an early legal obscurity, and the elementary divisions of what we now term civil and criminal law also becoming apparent; it is a book, however, which helps us to realise the importance of the reign of Henry II. in the history of our law, rather than one which perpetuates the fame of a jurist.

We must resume, however, our consideration of the legal history of the time, and we may say shortly that at the end of that reign we have—still somewhat uncertain in its character, but yet clearly established—a central and permanent court, where the king dispensed justice through the agency of skilled men; and we have also a system of itinerant courts held by justices who were acting for the king. The number and *personnel* of these justices was uncertain, the procedure of the courts was not established, but yet

we may say that before the end of the reign there is a permanent central tribunal of persons expert in the administration of justice—of sworn judges. It can be distinguished from the courts held by the itinerant justices, for though every such court is *curia Regis*, this is *capitalis curia Regis*. It can be distinguished from the exchequer, for though it often sits at the exchequer, and though its principal justices will be also the principal barons of the exchequer,

it has a seal of its own and may well sit away from Westminster, while the fiscal business of the exchequer could hardly be transacted elsewhere. It can be distinguished from those great councils of prelates and nobles that the king holds from time to time; questions too great for it are to be reserved for such councils. Probably it is already getting the name of "the bench," and its justices are justices residing at the bench. Though it is *curia Regis* and *capitalis curia Regis*, it is not necessarily held *coram ipso Rege*. Apparently the writs that summon litigants before it bid them appear "before the king or before his justices," that is to say, before the king if he happens to be in England and doing justice, and if not, then before his justices. No doubt when the king is in this country he will sometimes preside in court, but whether the justices will then follow the king in his progresses we cannot say for certain; as a matter of fact during the last eight years of his reign the king's visits to England were neither very frequent nor very long. On the whole Westminster seems to be becoming the fixed home of this tribunal; but as yet all its arrangements are very easily altered.' (Vol. i. p. 133.)

When we arrive at another period—"the age of Bracton," at the date at which this history ends, the beginning of the reign of Edward I.—we have reached a time when the courts of law had taken that final form which they were to retain for six centuries, until by modern lawyers they were thrown back into that cumbrous whole from which by the necessities of advancing civilisation they had gradually evolved themselves. The reforms of 1875 were carried out with perhaps too little regard to the course of history and the modern tendency to specialisation, and in the present Supreme Court of Judicature we see the form of the ruder age of the twelfth century.

If we look at what were at one time called the courts of common law, we see that there are at this time three distinct tribunals. The Exchequer was in a less defined state as a legal tribunal than the other courts to which we shall presently refer. It was 'in part a judicial tribunal, in part 'a financial bureau.' Its duty as a government department, if we may use the modern phrase, was the real reason for its action as a court of law, though it is a curious fact that the dual character which the Court of Exchequer afterwards came to possess as the forum in which disputes about the revenue were settled and as an ordinary court of law was already becoming apparent. Its duty was primarily to find what was due to the king, and to compel the payment of it. It was natural that from this more limited jurisdiction should grow a correlative one—namely, of adjudicating on claims against the king. Thus, when a man

‘thinks that he has a claim against the king, either in respect of some debt that the king owes him or in respect of some land that the king has seized, he will (this is the common practice of Edward I.’s day) present a petition to the king and council, and a favourable response to this petition will generally delegate the matter to the treasurer and barons, and bid them do what is right.’ (Vol. i. p. 171.)

Under such circumstances the barons of the Exchequer were told to obtain the more legal assistance of the judges of the other courts. This tribunal was resorted to by ordinary suitors for very obvious reasons. It was doubtless regarded as a kind of tribunal of arbitration: it was trusted in its special disputes; it was without the drawbacks of the local courts, and those who composed it were quite willing to enlarge their special jurisdiction. In spite of the fact that attempts were carefully made to prevent this trenching on the province of the other tribunals, the general jurisdiction of the Court of Exchequer by means of some legal fictions became an accomplished fact. In the age of Bracton this Court existed, but under difficulties, though it had reached a definite form as a special and a general tribunal. But the Exchequer was not in theory the king’s court; it was not the court in which justice was dispensed by the sovereign, or, in his absence, by his own selected judges. That court had by the time of Edward I. grown into two distinct tribunals, with two distinct court rolls—the Common Bench, ‘the appropriate tribunal for ordinary civil suits ‘between subject and subject,’ and the King’s Bench, which was, strictly speaking, ‘the court of our lord the king held ‘before the king himself.’

There is always a danger in formulating too sharply descriptions of institutions which have a gradual growth, and in some respects it would be misleading to speak of the King’s Bench at the end of the thirteenth century as if it were a simple municipal tribunal for the decision of ordinary disputes, for at any moment the king might be present, and its resemblance to a modern law court would then be lost in the return of the archaic and picturesque personal jurisdiction of the sovereign. This royal presence was, however, fast disappearing: it had appeared in a fluctuating manner for years, so that at times the Bench had been non-existent; while the Common Bench, as during the minority of Henry III., had been the king’s court. Nor has the distinction between the king’s court as we understand it and the king sitting with his council become altogether clear. ‘There remain in suspense many questions as to

'the composition and jurisdiction of this the highest of all tribunals. . . . The fourteenth century has to answer these questions; the thirteenth leaves them open.' It is enough, however, that at this particular period we are able to see in defined form the courts of law which for several centuries were to exist in the same shape and to exercise the same powers. Again, we are able to see with reasonable distinctness the despatch of justice in the king's name in the country districts. But though the itinerant judges, whether for the purpose of the trial of criminals or for the decision of civil disputes, were partly justices from the king's court, the exclusive duty had by no means yet devolved on them. Early in Henry III.'s reign 'this work was often entrusted to four knights of the shire; at a later time one of the permanent justices would usually be named, and allowed to associate some knights with himself.' In nothing is the ubiquity of the law more noticeable than in these species of jurisdiction. In the second year of Edward I.'s reign 'two thousand commissions of assize were issued;' in other words, the king's courts had jurisdiction in the remotest corner of the realm. But, again, we must not carry into our survey of this mediæval jurisdiction our ideas of the assize of the nineteenth century. The eyre, or iter, was much more than what we should now term a court of assize. Let us give the picture as it is presented to us in this 'History of English Law.'

'If we suppose an eyre in Cambridgeshire announced, this has the effect of stopping all Cambridgeshire business in the bench. Litigants who have been told to appear before the justices at Westminster will now have to appear before the justices in eyre at Cambridge. There is no business before the bench at Westminster if an eyre has been proclaimed in all the counties. Then, again, the justices are provided with a long list of interrogatories (*capitula itineris*) which they are to address to local juries. Every hundred, every vill in the county must be represented before them. These interrogatories—their number increases as time goes on—ransack the memories of the jurors and the local records for all that has happened in the shire since the last eyre took place some seven years ago; every crime, every invasion of royal rights, every neglect of police duties must be presented. The justices must sit in the county town from week to week and even from month to month before they will have got through the tedious task and inflicted the due tale of fines and amercements. Three or four of the permanent judges will be placed in the commission; with them will be associated some of the magnates of the district; bishops and even abbots, to the scandal of strict Churchmen, have to serve as justices in eyre. Probably it was thought expedient that some of the great freeholders of the county should be commissioned, in order that no man might say that his judges were not his peers. An eyre was a sore burden; the men of Cornwall

fled before the face of the justices; we hear assertions of a binding custom that an eyre shall not take place more than once in seven years.' (Vol. i. p. 180.)

The view which we thus get is of a wide-spreading justice, of courts of law as yet unfettered by technical rules. For what in more recent times has been known as 'equity' as distinguished from 'law'—in other words, a justice more rational because less technical—had not yet come into being, for the very simple reason that it was not yet required. The Chancery was, therefore, not a judicial tribunal at all. 'The need of a separate court of equity is not yet felt, for the King's Court, which is not yet hampered by many statutes or by accurately formulated case law, can do equity.' The non-existence of this 'equitable' jurisdiction indicates not only the absence of complex disputes for decision and of harassing legal technicalities, but also shows us that the functions of judges were more in the nature of those now exercised by men whom we should term arbitrators. We have reached, in fact, a period of some definiteness of jurisdictions combined with much indefiniteness of technical law and procedure. A greater complexity of civilisation was followed by a remarkable increase in the technicality of English law, and the age of Bracton was in some respects an Arcadian period, when a universal justice was dispensed without costs and without being encumbered by legal formalities.

Equally noticeable and important is the change which has now become apparent in the character of the judges of the king's courts: ecclesiastics are giving place to laymen, and among laymen a body of professional lawyers is becoming evident who are either advisers of or advocates for suitors. The change was gradual; the king's judges were not drawn exclusively from the laity for many years, and of Edward I.'s judges not a few were clerks. But before the end of Henry III.'s reign 'the lay element is beginning to outweigh the ecclesiastical,' and we have, therefore, passed out of that archaic period of society in which the priest is the judge. This is, of course, a social phenomenon of considerable importance; it marks a distinct epoch, for the more elementary a society the stronger is the religious influence in the sphere of law. The causes of this are diverse; with them, however, we are not concerned here. What has to be noted is the commencement of professional judges and of a professional class of lawyers, when precedents begin to be of validity, when technical forms gain a frequently unreasonable importance, and judicial decisions are based on a general

body of recognised and substantive law rather than on an uncertain mixture of moral and religious rules, customs, and common sense. The great work of Bracton is illustrative of this. It has been well described in a single phrase as being 'Romanesque in form, English in substance.' The influence of the canon law and of Roman law is obvious not only in its breadth of view, but in some classical pedantries, occasionally also in some actual rules which supply the absence of authority arising either from English dicta, practice, or custom. But 'the main matter of his treatise is genuine English law, laboriously collected out of 'the plea rolls of the King's Court.' Some of these decisions may have been grounded in the first instance on principles of the Roman law, but as they existed when Bracton took them in hand they were the gradual results of the judicial enunciations of the King's Court during the preceding periods. We must be careful, however, to guard ourselves against supposing that the modern system prevailed by which certain cases formed precedents which are binding authorities on the Court. Decisions in this mediæval age were illustrations of the custom of the King's Court, which 'is the custom of England and becomes the common law.' They constitute a body of recognised law, but they do not individually govern and conclude judges in regard to certain states of facts, nor were they known to all the judges or to all their clerks. They formulate the opinions of those who had had to administer the law upon all manner of subjects; these had been regarded from an essentially English point of view.* So far as Bracton was concerned, he only used his intimacy with canon and Roman law to enunciate his views gathered with exceptional industry from these decisions in an orderly and ample form and with keen point. He produced a treatise, and not a mere collection of notes and cases. His work focussed with amplitude and clearness the national law which had been growing up since the Conquest, and it enables us to realise with some distinctness the real beginnings of the English common law, and to define it in this particular age. The term 'common law' is a vague one: it has even in the minds of lawyers a considerable indefiniteness, it is regarded as something opposed both to statute and to case law, whereas this work of

* In the exceedingly important case raising the question whether a palatinate can be partitioned, the magnates reject foreign precedents, '*nec voluerunt judicare per exempla usitata in partibus transmarinis.*' (Vol. i. p. 162, note 3.)

Bracton shows us that the elements are largely composed of judicial decisions. It formed also a basis for the works of future writers and for many judicial decisions in later years, as the subject-matter of English law expanded with the advance of population and civilisation. It is, in fact, a kind of legal vantage-ground, dividing two periods, from which we can look into the past and the future.

Bracton's career is also illustrative of that characteristically hybrid personality of the time, the ecclesiastic who is half a lawyer and who is the product of the combination of two ages. He can be described in a few words. His name was Henry of Bratton; he was a Devonshire man, and probably began his career as clerk to William Raleigh, a justice of the Common Bench and later Bishop of Norwich. From a justice in eyre he became a justice of the King's Court, from which position he appears to have retired about the year 1257, though at the day of his death, in 1267, he continued to act as justice of assize in the West. If this were all that could be said of him, he would be regarded simply and solely as a lawyer; but soon after he ceased to be judge of the central court he became rector of Combe, near Teignhead, and subsequently rector of Bideford, arch-deacon of Barnstaple, and chancellor of Exeter Cathedral. Thus he was a lawyer and an ecclesiastic. He reached a judicial position, after the manner of the French judges of to-day, by subordinate official work. The best portion of his life he seems to have passed as a purely legal judge, and he ended it acting both as a judge of assize and a Church dignitary of some importance. He is typical of an age of transition, when a legal officer, though an ecclesiastic, was, while performing legal functions, practically wholly a lawyer and took up clerical functions rather as the occupation of the later days of life than as the work of his youth and manhood. But though both Bracton and his predecessor Glanville are noticeable figures in the history of English law it may be doubted whether it was desirable in this history to name two epochs after them. The works associated with their names enable us to understand the state of English law at the time when they were composed, but they cannot be regarded as books which influenced it in substance or in form; they are indicative rather than formative, and an historical period should hardly be named after any man unless he has had a paramount influence on his age.

In considering the growth of the legal tribunals we should naturally be led to a consideration not only of the forms by

which their assistance was obtained and of the means by which their judgements were enforced, but of the substantive law which formed the subject-matter of their decisions: to do so in detail would, however, plunge the reader into too large a mass of legal technicalities; but one feature in relation to this growth is obvious above all technicalities—that is, the native character both of English law and procedure. No doubt here and there Continental influences may be traceable, due to the learning of some ecclesiastics; but such features are isolated, and the progress of both law and procedure is marked by an individuality which has made the English common law a system of its own, not adopted from the codes or decisions of the Continent, but bearing on every part of it the impress of the national movements among which it arose and of the ruling men among whom it had its growth. Of this native character there is to be found a noticeable instance in the forms of actions—that is to say, that the nature of the relief to be given to a person who was aggrieved was shown by the writ which he obtained from the royal Chancery. This was essentially a practical proceeding; the writ was issued not in consequence of any juristic theory, but to meet an everyday want: it was the act of the sovereign, essentially the fountain of justice, standing above all his nobles and willing a right to his subjects. The system was one characteristic of a period of legal growth, during which time the writs must have embraced most of the ordinary causes of action and would thus tend to become fossilised.

‘The age of rapid growth is that which lies between 1154 and 1272. During that age the Chancery was doling out actions one by one. There is no solemn *actionem dabo* proclaimed to the world, but it becomes understood that a new writ is to be had, or that an old writ which hitherto might be had as a favour is now a writ of course. It was an empirical process, for the supply came in response to a demand: it was not dictated by an abstract jurisprudence; it was conditioned and perturbed by fiscal and political motives; it advanced along the old Roman road which leads from experiment to experiment.’ (Vol. ii. p. 557.)

It took nothing essential from the highly organised legal procedure of Rome; it went on its own way, administering to the needs of the people as they arose. ‘Tot erunt formulæ brevium quot sunt genera actionum,’ writes Bracton—that is to say, in other words, there was a distinct remedy, clear in its form, for every wrong. The modern lawyer is familiar with some writs, but the comprehensive character of this formulary system is scarcely to be

appreciated without a reference to the table of writs printed by the authors of this work. It shows the forms of actions brought before the justices who in the years 1256, 1269, and 1279 made an eyre in Northumberland, and also the actions on the roll of the Common Bench for Easter Term in 1271. They number sixty-one different forms in all and comprehend a list of remedies for the ordinary wrongs of everyday life. They include such writs as those of *De Nativo habendo* and *De Libertate probanda*—that is, writs for affirming villenage and negatory of it. Thus in the age of Bracton there existed a legal system very special in its character, but conducive to the advantage of the people, since it gave them a recognised series of remedies which no kind of judicial discretion could alter. It was a system, however, which, beneficial during its growth and early period of maturity, was certain to degenerate into one of undue technicality when society became more complex, and in later ages to conduce sometimes to a denial of justice and to require adaptation to the needs of later times by the administration of what is termed equity. But the very same power which in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries sent forth writs in various forms was that which later was to soften the rigour of the common law by a species of judicial discretion and common sense.

A class of professional lawyers is now also becoming pretty clearly defined. Such a growth is in some respects a subject rather for the student of sociology than of legal history; but it is so connected with the latter that it cannot be passed over in any view we take of English law at the end of the thirteenth century. Before the end of it

‘there already exists a legal profession, a class of men who make money by representing litigants before the courts and by giving legal advice. The evolution of this class has been slow, for it has been withstood by certain ancient principles. The old procedure required of a litigant that he should appear before the court in his own person and conduct his own cause in his own words. For one thing, the notion of agency, the notion that the words or acts of Roger may be attributed to Ralph because Ralph has been pleased to declare that this shall be so, is not of any great antiquity. In the second place so long as procedure is very formal, so long as the whole fate of a law-suit depends upon the exact words that the parties utter when they are before the tribunal, it is hardly fair that one of them should be represented by an expert who has studied the art of pleading:—John may fairly object that he has been summoned to answer not the circumspect Roger but the blundering Ralph; if Ralph cannot state his own case in due form of law, he is not entitled to an answer. Still in yet ancient days a litigant is allowed to bring into court with him a party of friends and to take “counsel” with them before he pleads. In the *Leges Henrici*

it is already the peculiar mark of an accusation of felony that the accused is allowed no counsel, but must answer at once; in all other cases a man may have counsel. What is more, it is by this time permitted that one of those who "are of counsel with him" should speak for him. The extreme captiousness of the old procedure is defeating its own end, and so a man is allowed to put forward some one else to speak for him, not in order that he may be bound by that other person's words, but in order that he may have a chance of correcting formal blunders and supplying omissions. What the litigant himself has said in court, he has said once and for all, and he is bound by it; but what a friend has said in his favour he may disavow. The professional pleader makes his way into the courts, not as one who will represent a litigant, but as one who will stand by the litigant's side and speak in his favour, subject, however, to correction, for his words will not bind his client until that client has expressly or tacitly adopted them. Perhaps the main object of having a pleader is that one may have two chances of pleading correctly. Even in the thirteenth century one may see the pleader disavowed. One John de Planez in his pleading for William of Cookham called Henry II. the grandfather instead of the father of King John; William disavowed the plea and the advocate was amerced for his blunder. And so before any one is taken at his pleader's words it is usual for the court to ask him whether he will abide by those words. Just because the pleader makes his appearance in this informal fashion, as a mere friend who stands by the litigant's side and provisionally speaks on his behalf, it is difficult for us to discover whether pleaders are commonly employed and whether they are already members of a professional class. The formal records of litigation take no notice of them unless they are disavowed.' (Vol. i. p. 190.)

We have here a clear and graphic description of the position of the advocate: he is just ceasing to be, to use a legal phrase, 'the next friend' of the litigant or the prisoner, and is becoming a professional and paid agent, skilled in one particular kind of work and retained for a particular purpose—namely, of acting as counsel in court. As the right of obtaining the assistance of a representative before the judges became recognised and common, the growth of a class of men to act as advocates is part of the ordinary and natural evolution of particular classes, of an advance into a more artificial state of society. As soon as we find, as is the case in the reign of Edward I., that the king has a number of pleaders who are known as his servants or 'serjeants' at law, we may at once accept the fact as evidence of the existence of this particular class and of the completion of the period of growth.

A curious and interesting point in regard to this subject, however, is the fact that, even at this early period in the history of English law, the class of attorneys was not the

same as the class of advocates. The attorney was at first merely an agent *ad hoc*; he was not a man of one profession; he was placed by the litigant as his 'agent' to gain or lose in some particular plea; the abbot appointed a monk and the baron his steward. If a more extensive agency was required, a man had to obtain the power of delegation by means of a royal writ, and he had to show some reason for his demand; the grantee of the writ must be going abroad on the king's business or be incapacitated by age or sickness. In time the same names begin to appear; it is easy indeed to understand how, in a particular locality, two or three persons should get into the habit of acting as attorneys when the justices in eyre came round, and how in time there should thus be found a number of persons familiar with the increasing formalities of the law, and willing, for a recompense, to save a litigant the trouble of attending to legal matters. But the reason for the growth of two separate classes of lawyers is not visible. In 1280 the corporation of London directed as to the civic courts that 'no countor was to be an attorney.' Of the cause of this direction we are ignorant, nor do the authors of this work give us any help. 'We see a 'group of counsel, of serjeants and apprentices on the one 'hand, and a group of professional attorneys on the other, 'and both of them derive their right to practise from the 'king, either mediately or immediately.' This is the state of things at the end of the thirteenth century, and if we were to hazard a suggestion as to this remarkable and long-continued division of the legal class in England it would be that it sprang from the same spirit of exclusive trading which produced the various guilds for commercial purposes, and from the same spirit of exclusiveness, of which self-interest was at the bottom, which gave in the mediæval times various rights to certain classes of the community, which, while they benefited those who possessed them, were a corresponding detriment to those who were without them.

Whilst justice was found throughout the country there were here and there some exceptions to its equal incidence. One instance is to be found in regard to serfdom. This subject belongs in some respects to the social as much as the legal history of our country, but in some respects also it has an important bearing on the state of English law in the Middle Ages. In legal phraseology all men were either freemen or slaves; the latter were called *servi*, *villani*, or *nativi*—the three terms representing one and the same idea.

But this serfdom was not absolute, it was relative, and in fact may well be called *prædial*:—

‘In the first place, it rarely, if ever, happens that the serfs are employed in other work than agriculture and its attendant processes; their function is to cultivate their lord’s demesne. In the second place, the serf usually holds more or less land, at least a cottage, or else is the member of a household whose head holds land, and the services that he does to his lord are constantly regarded in practice as the return which is due from him in respect of his tenement. . . . In the third place, his lord does not feed or clothe him; he makes his own living by cultivating his villein tenement, or, in case he is but a cottager, by earning wages at the hands of his wealthier neighbours. In the fourth place, he is seldom severed from his tenement, he is seldom sold as a chattel, though this happens now and again: he passes from feoffor to feoffee, from ancestor to heir, as annexed to the soil.’ (Vol. i. p. 397.)

The villein was thus in relation to his lord a slave, he had no proprietary right as against him, he was in theory as much his chattel as the goods in his castle; but the serfdom was a relation between two persons: it was essentially relative, for as regards persons other than his lord, the serf had nearly all the rights of a freeman. When the lord was not concerned, the criminal law made no difference between bond and free. ‘A blow given to the serf is a wrong to the ‘serf.’ The serf might, as regards men in general, ‘have ‘lands and goods, property and possession, and all appropriate remedies.’ But the position was essentially anomalous, for the serf could enforce an agreement made with a person other than his lord; yet if this person endeavoured to enforce a contract against the serf it was a good plea that he was the villein of X. when the agreement was made, and all that he had belonged to him. By degrees this plea seems to have become limited in its force, and while constantly urged in actions for land was not set up in purely ‘personal’ actions. The result of this singular position of the villein was, as is obvious, actually to place him in a better position than a freeman, for even when the villein could be sued, as in regard to chattels, yet, as the latter just as much as the serf belonged to the lord, it was hardly possible ‘to prevent collusion between villeins and friendly ‘lords.’ His state of villeinage gave the serf what must also be regarded as other privileges, for he was exempt from onerous and unpleasant duties. ‘He could not sit as a judge ‘in the communal courts, though he often had to go to them ‘in the humbler capacity of a “presenter.” So too he could ‘not be a juror in civil causes: this he probably regarded as ‘a blessed exemption from a duty which fell heavily on free-

‘men.’ On the other hand in the manorial courts full duties fell on the serf, he could be a presenter, a juror, an affeerer of amercements, and he was commonly the reeve of the township. To discuss here how a man became a serf, and how he could be emancipated, would carry us beyond our present subject; what we must bear in mind—the central idea, as it is termed by the authors of this work—is the relativity of serfage in England in the age of Bracton. It is a juristic curiosity, produced possibly by the desire of lawyers to simplify the state of the law, possibly by other motives which are mere matter of conjecture. The lawyers recked, write our authors, ‘little of the interests of any classes, high or low; but the interests of the State, of peace and order and royal justice, are ever before them.’ In the transformation of a more rigorous system of slavery into the relative serfdom of the Middle Ages it is probable that motives of statesmanship had some influence. While the change produced a social benefit to the class of villeins, it created a striking and peculiar feature of English law.

If we turn from the village to the town, from agriculture to commerce, we at once meet with the Jews, the bankers of the mediæval world. At the age of which we are now writing the Jew was a person of the first importance. Though he was in a position of relative servility to the king, that status gave him, like the serf, some positive advantages. Everything that he acquires, says Bracton, is for the king, but for that very reason it was to the advantage of the sovereign to protect the Jew. Thus a department of the Exchequer was organised for the supervision of the business of loans, which was in the hands mainly of the Jews. It was ‘a financial bureau and a judicial tribunal.’ It

‘acted judicially not merely as between king and Jew, but also as between king and Gentile when, as very often happened, the king had for some cause or other “seized into his hand” the debts due to one of his Jews by Christian debtors. Also it heard and determined all manner of disputes between Jew and Christian. Such disputes, it is true, generally related to loans of money, but the court seems to have aimed at and acquired a competence, and an exclusive competence, in all causes, whether civil or criminal, in which a Jew was implicated, unless it was some merely civil cause between two Hebrews, which could be left to a purely Jewish tribunal.’ (Vol. i. p. 453.)

Thus we have here two notable exceptions to the ordinary incidence of the law, which, except in criminal cases, removed the Jew almost entirely from the jurisdiction of English law; though a slave to the king, he was free in relation to all other persons. When Hebrew went to law

with Hebrew they appealed to their own tribunal, and when Hebrew and Christian could not agree the dispute was settled by a special tribunal, where the Jew was certain of a favourable audience. In the society of the thirteenth century, immediately before their expulsion from England, the Jews take a foremost place; they are necessary to the king, to the landowner, and to the merchant; they are helping, without the goodwill of the English people, in the development of the English nation, and, what is more to our immediate purpose, they are for the time being producing a marked effect on the course of English law by causing the establishment of special tribunals and the withdrawal of a large and important class of persons from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts. But whether these special tribunals affected the substance of our modern law is doubtful. Be that, however, as it may, no review of English law in the age of Bracton, as it has been termed, is complete which does not give some notice of the relation of the Jew to the laws of the age.

If we turn from laymen to Churchmen we find in clerks and monks a third class of persons, to some extent not subject to the general law. The exception is the more remarkable because it was from among ecclesiastics that judges and attorneys in legal affairs were mostly drawn. A monk, though civilly dead, and unable to hold any property of his own, 'was fully capable of acting as the agent of his "sovereign," and even in litigation he would often appear as the abbot's attorney.' The great place which he held in worldly affairs in mediæval days is too well known to be here insisted on, but nevertheless in the eye of the law he bore the same relation to the abbot as the villein to his lord; he could neither sue nor be sued without his lord. He was, in fact, in relation to his superior in the same position as the villein to his lord. 'Every monk was the absolute subject of some "sovereign"—normally an abbot, but 'in some cases a prior or a bishop.' The sovereign was an absolute monarch, and so long as he did not deprive his subjects of life or limb the temporal power in no way interfered with him. In criminal matters the position of the monk was an anomalous one. For small offences, *transgressiones*—or, in modern legal language, 'misdemeanours'—he could be punished in the temporal courts. In respect of graver crimes he enjoyed that benefit of clergy which was also the privilege of the clerk. In theory it can scarcely be called a privilege, since under it a clerk could be indicted before two tribunals. For the permission by the secular

power to the ecclesiastical power to try clerks who were accused of grave crimes in the ecclesiastical courts cannot be regarded as a relinquishing of the right of trial; it was merely the recognition of a co-ordinate and permitted jurisdiction. For it has to be remembered that at the time of which we are now speaking a preliminary investigation into the alleged offence was held, and if the jurors found that the accused was guilty he was delivered to his bishop for trial in the episcopal court.* The authors of this work regard the procedure in the bishop's court at the end of the thirteenth century as 'little better than a farce.' Thus the preliminary inquiry, though it may sometimes by the acquittal of a prisoner in the first instance have prevented unjust verdicts in the bishop's court arising out of personal motives, was much more a safeguard against the escape of ecclesiastical offenders who were really guilty of the crimes alleged against them. While in some respects it was an unrecognised protection of the monk and the clerk from episcopal or abbatial tyranny, it was more especially a check on the absolute immunity from punishment of those entitled to the protection of the Church, for the tendency of this privilege of the benefit of the clergy was to 'breed crime and impede the course of 'reasonable and impartial justice.' The temporal power, in

* In this general sketch of parts of a great subject we have abstained from details; it may be desirable, however, to print here a note of the authors of this history. It has been stated with confidence by writers on our legal history that the preliminary trial of the clerk in the temporal court was the result of the Statute of Westminster I. (1275), but this is by no means clear. 'Coke, 2nd Inst. 161, rightly observes that the change takes place between Bracton (f. 123 b) and Britton (vol. i. p. 27). He attributes it to Stat. West. I. (1275), cap. 2. But as a matter of fact the eyre rolls of the last years of Henry III. show that the change has already taken place. See, for example, the roll of a Cambridgeshire eyre of 45 Hen. III. (Assize Rolls, No. 82), *passim*. We know from Matthew Paris, "Chron. Maj." iv. 611, that in 1217 some new rule was made about criminous clerks and that the clergy disliked it, but we have not got the text of this decree. Despite the commentaries of Coke and Hale, we may doubt whether the Statute of Westminster made any definite change in the law. The new king sanctions the clerical privilege, but tells the prelates that they must be careful in the matter of purgation, and that otherwise he will be obliged to make some change. Thereupon in 1279 Abp. Peckham made some effort to improve the procedure in the spiritual court; Johnson, "Canons," ii. 267.' The certainty of the assertion of previous writers is an excellent instance of the often misleading confidence with which assumed facts were stated in regard to matters in great obscurity.

fact, could and did declare that there was a *prima-facie* case against an accused clerk: it could not and did not cause him to be punished. It asserted its theoretical right over him as an ordinary citizen, but in most cases its action allowed him to escape altogether from punishment, or only to suffer from the mild judgement of an ecclesiastical court. At the same time the admitted right and the practice of the temporal courts to punish forest offences and 'transgressions' committed by clerks or monks was a tacit surrender by the Church of the whole claim to the exclusion of monks and clerks from the jurisdiction of the sovereign. It put these men on the same legal level in regard to the lighter offences of daily life as the common layman, and was a continual reminder that the clerical caste was within the limits of the municipal law. The permission of the privilege of the benefit of clergy in respect of graver crimes, even under the limitations already mentioned, was a concession to the Church of a substantial kind, and was also an admission for the time that the Church was too powerful for the withholding of all exceptional privileges from it. It was a curious compromise, imperfect, no doubt, but tending to prevent friction between the Sovereign and ecclesiastical authorities, for we have only to recollect the quarrel between Henry II. and Becket to understand the practical gravity of such disputes. The position was illustrative of that essentially transitional period in the history of English law which is marked at the end of the thirteenth century, and it is to some extent also the conclusion of a conflict of many years between the king and the Church, by which neither the temporal nor ecclesiastical powers were able to obtain a decisive advantage.

In the preceding pages we have given but an outline of portions of the great subject of this work, which lends itself more easily than others to separate description. But even in these we see how closely English law is involved in the growth of every part of our political and social system, and how in town and country, among rich and poor, in every act of life we are at every hour brought into touch with it. Not the least of the services rendered by the authors of this work is the possibility, from a perusal of their pages, of a more general appreciation of the fallacy of regarding English law as a separate science, to be studied only in the abstract, when in truth in a large measure it is impossible to separate it from the general evolution of all English institutions.

- ART. VIII.—1. *Westminster.* By WALTER BESANT, M.A., F.S.A., Author of 'London,' &c. London: 1895.
2. *Memorials of St. James's Palace.* By EDGAR SHEPPARD, M.A., Sub-Dean of H.M.'s Chapel Royal. London: 1894.
3. *History of St. James's Square, and the Foundation of the West End of London.* By ARTHUR IRWIN DASENT. London: 1895.

LONDON is an inexhaustible subject, and the three books which have recently appeared upon it are full of interest and very pleasant reading. It may be that those who have made a study of the antiquities and early history of our great metropolis will learn but little from these volumes, which will nevertheless receive a hearty welcome from the general reader. Sir Walter Besant certainly adduces strong reasons for his belief that Thorney Island, the spot where Westminster Abbey now stands, instead of being a remote place amongst the marshes, chosen for a monastic foundation on the very ground of its desolation, was in truth a busy centre of trade before London existed at all. For the most part, however, he does not endeavour to present us with new theories. His object is fairly described in his preface as an attempt to restore the vanished Palaces of Westminster and Whitehall, to portray the life of the Abbey, to show the connexion of Westminster with the first of English printers, and to present the place as a town and borough with its streets and its people. His volume, embellished with many excellent illustrations, cannot but keep alive the general interest in old Westminster.

The subject-matter of Mr. Sheppard's work is very different. Here it is the author's end to make his readers acquainted with the interest that belongs to no 'vanished' palace, but to that old pile of buildings standing unchanged in the midst of modern surroundings, itself by far the most interesting object of that 'West End' which, following the Court of the Restoration, has now spread itself northwards and westwards in streets, and squares, and terraces, and gardens, such as no modern capital can show. St. James's Palace situated between St. James's Park and the angle caused by the meeting of Pall Mall and St. James's Street, the two great streets of modern clubland, stands on the highway from the west to the City, and past it ebbs and flows, morning and evening, a steady stream of population, flowing eastwards

towards business and westwards again towards home and rest. The exterior aspect of no building is more familiar to the daily life of Londoners than that of St. James's Palace. Thousands of gentlemen, moreover, at the frequent levees of every season throng the spacious apartments leading to the throne-room. Yet how little is known to most Londoners either of the history which belongs to almost every room of the Palace, or of the pictures and objects of interest within its walls! Mr. Sheppard's admirable illustrations will no doubt secure increased attention to much that the Palace contains; yet we cannot but regret that where such abundance of material exists, an author should have thought it worth his while to encumber so many of his pages with other matters and details of a character too trifling for record save in the columns of a 'Society journal.'

Mr. Arthur Dasent has made a very successful as well as painstaking attempt to describe the rise and history of St. James's Square, taking it house by house, and founding his researches largely on the series of parochial rate-books still preserved at the St. James's Vestry Hall. In depicting the life that filled the famous Square and its precincts, and for historical details, he has had recourse to the well-known diaries of Pepys, Evelyn, and Luttrell, and to the Memoirs of Walpole, Hervey, and Wraxall, to the reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, to original documents in the Public Record Office and the British Museum, and to the ready assistance of householders in the Square. His narrative, moreover, is occasionally relieved by the reproduction of some old plan or picture which serves to bring more vividly before the reader the life of a bygone age.

Such books as these will always find many readers amongst the ardent London-lovers, who will exclaim with Milton—

'O city, founded by Dardanian hands,
Whose towering front the circling realms commands,
Too blest abode! no loveliness we see
In all the earth, but it abounds in thee!'

Thousands share the feeling with which Charles Lamb wrote to Wordsworth in Westmoreland—

'I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and as intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, wagons, playhouses, all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden—the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles—life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night; the impossibility of being dull

in Fleet Street; the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print shops, the old book-stalls, parsons cheapening books, coffee houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes—London itself a pantomime and a masquerade—all these things work themselves into my mind, and feed me without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into night walks about the crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life. . . . I consider the clouds above me but as a roof beautifully painted, but unable to satisfy the mind, and at last, like the pictures of the apartment of a connoisseur, unable to afford him any longer a pleasure. So fading upon me, from disuse, have been the beauties of nature, as they have been confinedly called, so ever fresh, and green, and warm are all the inventions of man, and assemblies of men, in this great city.'

In the general acceptance of the name London includes Westminster, which, indeed, in one sense has become its very axis, and which contains the most precious jewels of its treasury. But Sir Walter Besant is at pains to prove to us how distinct it was formerly, that it has had no citizens, that it has no civic memories. It never had a 'folks-mote.' Where the Church—i.e. the abbot—had rule, there was no room for the rule of the people.

Thorney Island, as it is usually called—though Sir Walter Besant always mentions it as the 'Isle of Bramble'—was a peninsula of dry sand and gravel, almost insulated amongst the marshes formed in early times where the Thames was joined by the little river Eye, which gave its name to Tyburn, and which still—greatly diminished in size—flows, as a sewer, under New Bond Street, the Green Park, and Buckingham Palace. The island was afterwards approached by four gates and entered by two bridges. It has been the usual theory that it was chosen as the site of an abbey on account of its seclusion, silence, and remoteness. Dean Stanley, in his 'Memorials of Westminster,' describes it as a spot 'intrenched, marsh within marsh, forest within forest, 'a "locus terribilis,"' which had 'the advantages of a 'Thebaid.' But our author endeavours to prove—by evidence of situation, excavation, ancient monuments, tradition, and history—that this extreme solitude only existed in imagination, chiefly because of the position of the semi-island on the line of the Watling Street and the highway of the river, from the discovery of remains of a small Roman station beneath the Abbey, and from the tradition of a temple of Apollo on the same site. At any rate it is certain that long before a monastic institution, a little

church existed here, probably founded by that Sebert, King of the East Saxons, a convert of Mellitus, whose traditional tomb is one of the oldest relics in the Abbey. The first historian of Westminster, Sulcard, tells how on a Sunday night, being the eve of the day on which the new church was to be consecrated by Mellitus, the fisherman Edric was watching his nets on the bank of the island. Through the gloaming he saw a bright light on the opposite shore, and, having rowed across, found there an old man, who asked to be ferried over the stream. The stranger landed on the island, and walked to the church, leaning on a staff, with which he struck the ground twice upon his way, when springs of water bubbled up. Then, above the church, appeared a ladder reaching to the heavens, with angels ascending and descending upon it. And in the church itself other angels bore candles, by the light of which the mysterious one went through all the forms of consecration. And when that old man came back to the boat he bade Edric tell Mellitus that the church was already consecrated, and by St. Peter himself.

It is Mellitus who is said to have changed the name of the place from Thorney to Westminster, in honour of the new sanctuary, soon to serve as a chapel to the palace of the Anglo-Saxon kings, which rose near it. Thus it became especially connected with all the miraculous story of Edward the Confessor, who eventually, in obedience to a vision seen by an old hermit near Worcester, pulled down the original church, which he rebuilt as 'the Collegiate Church of St. Peter at Westminster,' the first cruciform church erected in England.

The Bayeux tapestry, of which Sir Walter Besant gives us a very welcome representation, now alone shows us—rudely, but probably truthfully—what the church of St. Edward was like. Of the abbey which was built by its side some fragments may still be seen—portions of the refectory, dormitory, and south cloister. One relic, little known to sightseers, is of surpassing interest. In the east cloister, a little south of the entrance to the chapter house, is a double door, opened by seven keys, which, till very recently, perhaps still, can only be used by special permission signed by the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Comptroller of the Exchequer. Here, in the dim light, we may still look upon two bays of the Confessor's work, with a massy Saxon pillar between them, upon the capitals of which the monks have made rude attempts

at carving, still incomplete. An ancient stone altar also remains, with a hollow in the slab to receive a portable altar stone. To this sacred chamber, says Dean Stanley,

'were brought the most precious possessions of the State—the regalia of the Saxon monarchy; the Black Rood of St. Margaret ("the Holy Cross of Holyrood") from Scotland; the "Crocis Gneyth" (or cross of St. Neot) from Wales, deposited here by Edward I.; the sceptre or rod of Moses; the ampulla of Henry IV.; the sword with which King Athelstane cut through the rock at Dunbar; the sword of Wayland Smith, by which Henry II. was knighted; the sword of Tristan, presented to John by the Emperor; the dagger which wounded Edward I. at Acre; the iron gauntlet worn by John of France when taken prisoner at Poitiers.'

Now, however, nothing remains under the heavy, low-browed arches but some old iron-bound chests, in which the king's exchequer was moved, and to which the standards used in 'the trial of the pyx' have been brought.

'The Chapel of the Pyx,' as it is called, is the most precious relic of ancient Westminster. Almost all the rest of the Confessor's work perished under Henry III., when the present glorious abbey church arose, built of stone from the Surrey village ever since called Godstone, from the service to which it was given. The abbey church erected by Henry III. and Edward I. is that which we now see; only the chantry of Henry V. has arisen over his grave, the Lady Chapel has been pulled down to make room for the splendid Chapel of Henry VII., and the western towers have been completed under Wren and his pupil Hawksmoor. Abbot Littlington in 1380 added several surrounding buildings, which still remain—the Jerusalem Chamber, the Abbot's House now the Deanery, and the College Hall.

In its early years the great feature of the Abbey was the mosaic and marble shrine of the Confessor, one of the most interesting mediæval monuments in the world, to which his 'incorrupt body' was borne upon the shoulders of Plantagenet princes, whose own sepulchres were soon to gather around it. Here it lies, iron-bound in a stone coffin, upon which we can look down from the top of the neighbouring chantry. For a long time one of the arches at the end of the shrine was left open, that sick persons might creep through and touch it. Seven recesses still remain at the sides, arranged for kneeling pilgrims. In known though nameless graves, by the side of the holy one, rest his nearest relations—his wife, Edith, 'of venerable memory,' the sister of Harold, and his great-niece Edith, afterwards called

Maud, 'the very mirror of piety, humility, and princely 'bounty,' the wife of Henry I. No other church in the world possesses the unspeakable interest, the exquisite beauty, pathos, antiquity, and colour of the chapel which contains the shrine. The monuments of the mediæval popes, or the shattered fragments of them, are either banished to the crypt of St. Peter's or stand alone in such half-deserted churches as exist at Viterbo, Perugia, Villeneuve, La Chaise-Dieu, or S. Salvatore in Lauro. Very few German emperors have worthy monuments, such as those at Bamberg and Innsbruck. The magnificent tombs of the kings and princes of Spain are scattered over the peninsula, at Toledo, Granada, Avila, and ruined Poblet. The royal monuments of Naples, sometimes of the utmost splendour, are scattered amongst its most insignificant churches. The sultans lie separately, surrounded by their immediate families, in the 'turbe' of Broussa and Constantinople. The memorials of the kings of France, it is true, are now gathered at St. Denis, in most stately historic succession, but their effigies are mostly mutilated, and the monuments which support them are modern. The finest collection of royal monuments existing out of England is that of the Danish sovereigns in the beautiful church by the silent fiord of Roeskilde. But here, in Westminster, the chapel of the Confessor, surrounded with monuments, glorious in their ancient colour, with all the time-stained splendour of their many centuries, is, as John Dart says, 'paved with 'princes, and a royal race, kings, queens, and princes, who 'all wished to rest as near as possible to the miracle-working 'shrine.'

Most inspiring or touching, to those who care for English history, is the story of these tombs, the memories they arouse and the lessons they convey. First comes the great founder, Henry III., whose effigy was so splendidly attired at his funeral that 'he shone more magnificent when dead 'than he appeared when living,' who rests aloft upon the tomb for which his son Edward, so passionately grieved at his death, brought the most precious marbles from Italy. On one side of him is the simple tomb of Edward I. himself—'Scottorum malleus'—on the other the exquisitely beautiful figure of his beloved first wife, Eleanor, 'the queen of good 'memory.' Then comes Philippa of Hainault, once surrounded by seventy statuettes of her royal relations; and Edward III., who was followed hither to his grave by all who survived of the famous children still represented around

him; then Richard II., with Anne of Bohemia, whom he loved so passionately that he caused the palace where she died to be razed to the ground, that it might not remind him of his loss; and lastly Henry V. in the tomb of unequalled magnificence, before which 'all England mourned.'

Such is the great group around the Confessor's grave. But in the solemn byways of the Abbey are many other royal monuments—of brothers, sisters, aunts, cousins of kings, which call up memories, always interesting, often tender and pathetic, as in the case of the little dumb daughter of Henry III.; of Princess Mary, whose epitaph tells how she 'found joy' for herself, but 'left longings' to her parents; and Princess Sophia, in her cradle, 'a royal rosebud, plucked 'by premature fate, and snatched away from her parents, 'that she might flourish again in the rosary of Christ.'

Sir Walter Besant's book does not dwell much upon the contents of Westminster Abbey. They have all been fully described in the pages of Dean Stanley, of Mr. Augustus Hare, and of Mrs. Murray Smith. He dwells rather upon the ancient palace of Westminster and its precincts, with the crowded population of Court attendants. No less than 20,000 persons, he thinks, probably had 'bouche at court' here during the reign of Richard II. He depicts the noble old buildings of the palace, including the 'Painted Chamber,' in which the Confessor died, and the 'Norman Council Chamber,' where the death-warrant of Charles I. was signed. They are all gone now; 'even the ivory house of Ahab or the 'golden house of Nero has not been more completely swept 'away;' for after they were gutted by fire in 1834, though so much of the walls remained that a complete restoration would not have been difficult, the whole palace was destroyed, and the most precious memorial of our early sovereigns was lost to us for ever. Of their life here Besant gives us many curious glimpses, especially of their visits to the walled-up hermit on the south side of the Infirmary Cloister, the recluse of Westminster, 'the man of perfect life,' to whom Richard II. repaired before he set forth against his rebels, and to whom Henry V., 'the tearful prince,' came on the night after his father's death. He dwells upon what is known—and very little it is—of Caxton (named from Causton, in Kent), who brought over the art of printing from the Netherlands, and established it in the precincts of the Abbey in the time of Prior Islip.

The original circuit of Westminster contained five palaces—Westminster, Whitehall, St. James's, Buckingham, and

Kensington. Of these, under the Stuart sovereigns, Whitehall was far the greatest, forming the connecting link between London and Westminster, though nothing remains of it now but the banqueting-house of Inigo Jones.

Far the most interesting of the royal palaces which remain in London is St. James's, which enshrines the memory of a greater succession of historic events than any other domestic building in England, Windsor Castle not excepted. Its story is told at length by the Rev. Edgar Sheppard, in two ponderous volumes, which, though weighted even by such insignificant and uninteresting details as the dresses worn by the ladies of the present day at royal marriages and Drawing-Rooms, contain a trustworthy record of the events connected with their subject, and are rendered valuable by their excellent illustrations.

At a very early Norman date, not precisely known, 'a spittal for mayden lepers' was built in a situation 'discreetly chosen, as it was as dreary and lonely as could be desired for the isolation of the inmates,' and dedicated to St. James. Having been rebuilt by an abbot of Westminster in the time of Henry III., it was given to Eton College by Henry VI., but continued to be used as a hospital till Henry VIII., acquiring its site by exchange, pulled it down, and built in its place 'a magnificent and goodly house,' with a park in front enclosed by a brick wall. Nichols, quoting Norden, the surveyor of Elizabeth's time, describes the royal manor, which retained its old name of St. James's, as standing 'from other buyldinges about two furlonges, having a farm-house opposite its north gate,' and dilates on its situation, endued with a good air and pleasant prospects. 'On the east, London offereth itself to view; on the south, the stately buyldings of Westminster, with the pleasant park, and the delights thereof; on the north, the green fields.' All the surroundings of the palace are changed now, but the noble old gateway which looks up St. James's Street, with six smaller turrets, survives from the countrified manor-house of the Tudor sovereigns, and, internally, the Chapel Royal and the Presence Chamber hung with old Mortlake tapestries, in which the H of Henry and the A of Anne Boleyn remain amongst the ornaments of the chimneypiece.

Mary I., who was very fond of her 'manor of St. James's beyond Charing Cross,' made it the principal home of her gloomy latter years. There, when she felt her death approaching, 'a few hours before break of day,' she ordered

Mass to be said in her chamber, and, at the elevation of the Host, she lifted her weary eyes to heaven, and, as the benediction was spoken, her head dropped and she expired. Afterwards she lay in state, but, by her own desire, in no royal ornaments, and in the dress of a poor nun. The palace was never constantly inhabited afterwards till the time of James I., when it was given to Prince Henry, who lived there with a household of 426 members, over whom such strict supervision was maintained that any one who used a bad word was obliged to put a fine into a box, whence it was doled out to the poor. Here, not without suspicion of poison, the beloved prince died, and hence 2,000 voluntary mourners followed his remains to the Abbey.

Charles I. lived much at St. James's, and its old red gateway may recall Henrietta Maria, who received her mother, Marie de Médicis, there, kneeling with all her children around her. The King collected in the palace many of the pictures afterwards so cruelly dispersed, and took great pleasure in beautifying its park and gardens. James I. had established a menagerie there, and Charles I. added the 'physicke' (botanical) garden, where Evelyn first saw orange trees. At the same time, on the site now occupied by Marlborough House, were made the 'two grand gardens' described by La Serre, 'one with parterres of different figures, bordered 'on every side with a hedge of box,' and filled 'with all 'sorts of fine flowers;' the other with 'divers walks, some 'sanded, and others of grass, but all edged on both sides by 'an infinity of fruit trees.' One of these gardens, too, was bordered by a cloister, where one might see 'the rarest 'wonders of Italy in a great number of stone and bronze 'statues.' Two bronze statues remained in the palace gardens till 1874, since which time (who can tell why?) they have been taken to the Victoria Tower at Westminster.

Here five of the children of Charles I. were born, and here little Princess Anne died—the fat baby of Vandyke's famous picture. Here also occurred the last interview of the King with two of his children, of which Princess Elizabeth has left so touching a description, while we know, from others, how 'he took the princess in his arms and kissed her, and 'gave her two seals with diamonds, and prayed for the 'blessing of God on her and the rest of his children, and 'there was great weeping.' Hence, too, next day, in the early morning, having put on two shirts because of the excessive cold, and after praying and receiving the Sacrament from Bishop Juxon, Charles I. 'passed through the

'garden on foot, and so into the park,' and to his execution at Whitehall.

Charles I. had liked St. James's Park, but Charles II. loved it. He employed the famous Le Nôtre to lay out its avenues, and there he was wont to play at bowls and to feed his waterfowl and run after his dogs, with a simple ease 'which made the common people adore him.' Still, his joyous nature made him prefer Whitehall as a residence; so that he left the home where he had been born, the palace of sad associations, to his brother James, who used to seclude himself there, with all his family, in deepest mourning, on the anniversary of his father's death. It was at St. James's that the three sons of James by his first wife were born and died, and there Anne Hyde herself expired, exclaiming, 'What is truth?' to the bishop who was watching her last moments. There also were born and died the little Catherine, Charles, Isabella, and Charlotte, children of Mary of Modena, and there—in the last room at the east end of the south front—occurred the birth of Prince James Francis Edward, which gave rise to so many contradictory surmises, though no less than sixty-seven persons, including the Queen Dowager, were present at the event.

The palace was fitted up afresh for Princess Anne, who, as well as her sister, had been born and married there, and who there received the news of William III.'s death from Burnet, the Bishop of Salisbury, who 'drove hard' to bring it to her, 'prostrating himself at the new Queen's feet, full of joy and duty.' At St. James's Queen Anne's seventeen children were born and died, including the Duke of Gloucester, the preternaturally intelligent boy, who lived till he was eleven. Ere this the situation of the palace had ceased to be secluded. The Mall in the park was now crowded on summer evenings by the finest company in London, brocaded and feathered ladies with the full-wigged beaux to whom smoking was on no account permitted. Swift, writing to Stella, said, 'When I pass the Mall in the evening it is prodigious to see the number of ladies walking there.' Catherine Street, too, the highway from Whitehall, named at first after Catherine of Braganza, was beginning to be called Pall Mall, from the primitive croquet played close by with a ball (*palla*) and a mallet (*maglia*).

Walpole describes having the great wish of his childhood fulfilled by being taken, at ten, to St. James's to see George I.—'an elderly man, rather pale, not tall, of an aspect rather good than august, with a dark tie wig, a

‘ plain coat, waistcoat and breeches of snuff-coloured cloth, with stockings of the same colour, and a blue ribbon over all. . . . Just beyond his Majesty stood [the Duchess of Kendal] a very tall, lean, ill-favoured old lady.’

At St. James's, Caroline of Anspach passed most of her unselfish and charitable life. There she presided over her celebrated Drawing-Rooms, surrounded by beautiful Howards, Lepells, and Bellendens, often held on Sundays after service at the Chapel Royal, to which ladies accordingly went *en grande tenue*. And there she died, vainly endeavouring to console her heart-broken husband with her last breath, yet, when she urged him to marry again, hearing him sob out, ‘ Oh non, j'aurai des maitresses.’ Nevertheless he loved his wife so much that after he lost her all the queens had to be removed from his packs of cards, because the very sight of them renewed his grief so pitifully. His ebullitions of temper had always been terrible. Walpole describes him as kicking his hat about the room in his rages, and Wraxall his wig. As he had been hated by his own father, so he hated his son, utterly ignoring him on all public occasions, and when told of his death, whilst playing at cards, announcing the news to Lady Yarmouth by the simple words, ‘ Il est mort,’ and going on as if nothing had happened.

George III. lived much at St. James's, where George IV. and many of his other children were born and married, and where Queen Charlotte held the Drawing-Rooms for which her head was dressed at Kew, though her gown was put on in the palace. And so we come to the time of our own beloved Queen, presented at Queen Adelaide's Drawing-Room in her twelfth year, confirmed and married in the chapel.

Few except those who attend levees now visit the quaint old rooms of St. James's, with their royal portraits, mostly brought from Hampton Court; but all may see the courtyard where the sovereigns are proclaimed and first presented to the people; the garden gate where George III. first received Queen Charlotte and where he was attacked by Margaret Nicholson; and the chapel where so many royal marriages have taken place, and where Samuel Johnson, as a little child, was one of those touched for the king's evil, after which he always remembered Queen Anne as ‘ a lady in diamonds, with a long black hood.’

That which had changed St. James's most from a country to a town palace was the acquirement of the site of the Pall Mall Field, or Close, by Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans,

the founder of West End London. He obtained a building-lease of forty-five acres, and the traveller Monconys, in 1663, describes the result of his operations as 'une très grande place, qui est peut-être quatre fois la Place Royale et deux fois Belle-Cour.' Thither the aristocracy soon began to migrate from the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn Fields, Sir William Stanley being probably the first to take up his residence in the new buildings, though he was speedily followed by a crowd of 'the men of honour and quality' for whom they were intended. In 1671 Chamberlayne already speaks of 'the many stately uniform piles in St. James's Fields.'

The new St. James's Square enclosed four and a half acres, but they were long an open space, neither paved nor lighted, a shabby village-green with an occasional tree, a place where fireworks were often displayed, but which at other times was so ill guarded that a gentleman was robbed by a highwayman as he was crossing it in the time of William III. Thus it continued till December 1697, when a movement was made to commemorate the victories of William III., and the 'King's statue in brass' was ordered to be set up in St. James's Square, with several devices and mottoes concerning the trampling down of Popery and breaking the bonds of slaves. Yet it was not till 1727 that the accumulation of refuse, dead dogs, and cinders which occupied the centre of the space was cleared away and the square paved, and not till 1808 that a statue of William III., as a Roman emperor, was set up in the centre of a basin of water, funds being provided by a long-forgotten legacy of one Samuel Travers (1724) for 'an equestrian statue to the glorious memory of my master, William the Third.' The square was only enclosed and planted as a garden in the middle of the nineteenth century: the view of 1812 represents the statue standing in a swampy pool closely surrounded by an iron railing, but the rest of the space left open.

The earliest rate-book applying to the square is that of 1676, which gives the names of its thirteen first inhabitants—the Marquis of Blanquefort, Lady Newburgh, the Countess of Warwick, the Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Clarendon, Sir Cyril Wyche, Lawrence Hyde, Sir Fulke Lucy, Lord Purbeck, Lord Halifax, Sir Allen Apsley, Madam Churchill, and Madam Davis.

Henry Jermyn built for himself the magnificent house in which he spent his closing years. Here the man who, in

early life, had been the seducer of Elizabeth Villiers, the maid of honour; the man whom Evelyn describes as always living 'in plenty, even abroad, whilst his Majesty was a 'sufferer,' continued, at eighty, and nearly blind, to lose great sums at cards, 'having one who sits by him to name 'the spots on the cards.'

It is curious to mark how many of the houses in the square—from its neighbourhood to Whitehall and St. James's—were inhabited by the mistresses and illegitimate children of the Stuart kings. In a house swallowed up by the Army and Navy Club lived Moll Davis, the sprightly actress and dancer admired by Pepys, who was already ousted from the King's affections, which she had first attracted by her fascinating rendering of the song, 'My Lodging is on the Cold Ground,' and whose daughter married the second Earl of Derwentwater, by whom she was mother of the Jacobite lord, beheaded on Tower Hill. At No. 21, afterwards Winchester House and the home of the pious Bishop Sumner, lived Arabella Churchill, the ill-favoured mistress of James II. when Duke of York, whom De Grammont describes as 'a tall creature, 'pale-faced, nothing but skin and bone.' And she was succeeded in the same house by Catherine Sedley, Countess of Dorchester, another of the ill-favoured mistresses whom Charles II. declared that the priests had imposed upon his brother by way of penance. At No. 15 resided the Earl of Kildare, who married the beautiful Lady Elizabeth Jones, daughter of Lord Ranelagh, supposed to have been one of Charles II.'s many loves, and who, dying at ninety-three, was buried near his grave in Westminster Abbey. To the same famous resting-place was taken Lady Williams, daughter of Sir J. Shipwith, who had lived at No. 13 and who is supposed to have been too intimate with the Duke of York. At No. 12 lived Aubrey de Vere, Earl of Oxford, whose daughter and heiress married the first Duke of St. Albans, eldest son of Charles II. by Nell Gwynne. Four of the natural sons of Charles II. resided in the square. At No. 5 lived Charles, Duke of Richmond, son of the Duchess of Portsmouth, and after him Charles, Duke of St. Albans. At No. 12 lived George FitzRoy, Duke of Northumberland, youngest son of Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, the best of the King's numerous family. At No. 19, Cleveland House, lived Charles FitzRoy, first Duke of Cleveland, who died in the house, and whose funeral started thence for the Abbey.

Time, which changes everything, has renovated and altered almost all the old houses of the square. Cleveland House, built by Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex, and sold by him in 1722 to the first Duke of Cleveland, was only pulled down after the death of the last duke in 1891. Nos. 1 and 2, though only occupying the site of old Ossulston House, still attract attention from their street-posts, made from guns taken from the French by Edward Boscawen, who commanded the 'Namur' in the battle of Finistère. St. Alban's House, afterwards Ormond, afterwards Chandos House, has perished—the mansion which was built for Henry Jermyn by the Richard Frith commemorated in Frith Street, which was occupied by Cosimo III., Grand Duke of Tuscany, during his visit to London, and which had a long succession of illustrious owners, including Lord Sunderland and his charming wife, whom Queen Anne accused of 'playing the hypocrite more than ever, running 'from church to church, and keeping such a clatter with her 'devotions that it really turns one's stomach.' The name of Ormond Yard alone now commemorates this famous dwelling. One or two houses only have remained long in the same family. No. 6 has belonged to the Herveys ever since it was built in 1677, and No. 4 to the ancestors of Earl Cowper since the time of George I.

The houses at the south-east corner of the square are the most interesting of those still remaining. Of these the most important is Norfolk House, with its stately rooms and coved ceilings, built by Matthew Brettingham for the ninth duke, and described by Mrs. Delany as finished in 1756. At the back is an older building, now used as a muniment office, which was inhabited for three years by Frederick, Prince of Wales, in which George III. was born, and where he was christened by the same Thomas Secker, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, by whom he was married and crowned. The Duke of York was also born here, before the royal visitors left in 1741 for Leicester House.

Adjoining Norfolk House, in the same block of buildings, is London House, bought for the see in 1771, and inhabited ever since by Bishops of London, though rebuilt by Bishop Howley in 1820. The remainder of the block is taken up by Derby House, originally built by the famous cavalier Lord Bellasis, who is buried under a stately monument which still exists in the blackened churchyard of St. Giles-in-the-Fields. The house was sold by the fourth

Earl of Dartmouth to the Prime Minister Earl of Derby in 1854.

Mr. Dasent's 'History of St. James's Square' tells us many curious stories of the successive occupants of its houses, and it unites, we are glad to find, with Sir Walter Besant's 'Westminster' in deploring the frequent, and often needless, destruction of historic memorials in England. It is within the memory of very many still living that the old Westminster Palace, with its ancient sculptures, its painted chambers, and delicate cloisters, was utterly swept away. As late as 1877 the house in York Street, Westminster—the 'pretty garden house' where Milton lived in his blindness, where his first wife, Mary Powell, died, and where he married his second wife, his 'espoused saint,' Catherine Woodcocke—was pulled down without a voice being raised to save it, though even its later memories, when Hazlitt, and Charles Lamb with his sister, lived there, might have given it as great a claim upon the consideration of the public as the house of Thomas Carlyle in Cheyne Row.

The charming old almshouses in Rochester Row, and St. Margaret's Hospital—the Greencoat School, have also perished in our time; the historic church of St. Margaret, where the headless body of Raleigh reposes, has been terribly mutilated and injured under the name of 'restoration.' But an even more grievous and unnecessary destruction was brought about by greed for money as lately as 1893. Till then amid the labyrinthine streets between Victoria Street and Buckingham Palace Road was an oasis of such tranquil beauty and charm as can now no longer be found in the whole of London. A fine old *grille* of richest iron-work and a mass of lilac trees, laden with flowers in spring, separated the busy street from a broad green lawn, bordered by the ancient houses of Emanuel Hospital, with their sculptured porches, brilliant flowers, and stone-paved walks. At the end rose the chapel, with an elaborate armorial pediment and picturesque bell cupola. It was built 'for 'twenty aged folk' by Lady Dacre of Hurstmonceaux, sister of the poet statesman Lord Buckhurst, and at one time maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth. She had been so anxious about her foundation that she declared upon her deathbed that her spirit would always haunt it, and the Dean and canons of Westminster had to be summoned to exorcise the faithful benefactress. Her 'lovely house of 'refuge,' which 'made one glad that Dives had remembered

'Lazarus,' was doomed three years ago, that money might be made out of the site. Through a whole summer the aged pensioners might be seen sitting at their doors, often sobbing and weeping—as the writer can testify—at the cruelty which could turn them out and the folly which could imagine that an unwelcomed and unwelcome residence with their families could ever make up for this green retreat, which was theirs by right of Lady Dacre's will. All was in vain. Yet truly does Sir Walter Besant say—

'Think what a city loses by the destruction of such a place—the daily object-lesson in our duty to the friendless and the helpless, the memory of bygone worthies, the sentiment of brotherhood. That is one way of considering the loss. Another way is to think of it as a place of singular beauty, of such beauty as we cannot possibly reproduce. And we have wilfully and needlessly destroyed it. It is a national disaster of the gravest, the most irreparable kind that such monuments as old almshouses, old City churches, old schools, old gates, old foundations of any kind should be given over to any body of men, with permission to tear down and destroy at their will, and under pretence of benefiting the parish. Can one benefit a man by destroying his memory? Can one improve a parish by cutting off its connexion with the past?'

ART. IX.—*John Stuart Blackie: a Biography.* By ANNA M. STÓDDART. In two volumes. Edinburgh and London: 1895.

WITH Professor Blackie there disappeared a Scottish celebrity who will survive in the memory and affections of his countrymen. In every sense his was a striking personality. In the Highlands and in the Lowlands the familiar figure once seen was not easily forgotten. From boyhood onwards, although he worshipped the Greek mythology, he had never cared to sacrifice to the Graces; and in manhood the sturdy independence of his character was carried out in his habitual costume. Whether crossing a moor in Lochaber, or striding along Princes Street on his way to the lecture room, or travelling in Attica, he might be recognised by the Rembrandt-like soft grey hat, the plaid knotted carelessly round the spare form, and, above all, by the swing of the stout oaken staff, in which he vented superfluous energy and grasped in what he called his 'significant knuckles.' The late Master of Balliol, with whom we may find occasion to contrast and compare him, said once that if human life were ten years longer the world would come to a standstill—a saying thus interpreted and expanded by Mr. Tollemache: 'that this evil result would ensue if life were thus lengthened without youth being correspondingly lengthened.' Few men have approached more nearly than Blackie to the ideal which Jowett assumed to be unattainable. The bodily strength had necessarily abated, but the fire of the eye was undimmed to the last; the old man had still the freshness of boyhood which had often proved a snare and a stumbling-block, with the quick sensibility of the ardent youth who is earnestly looking forward to the far future.

Nothing, perhaps, is more remarkable about the man than the methods by which he endeared himself to all classes of Scotchmen, for he was the antithesis of the typical Scot. The Scot is cautious and reserved to a fault: he has an almost superstitious reverence for orthodoxy in religion as he understands it; he treats serious subjects with suitable solemnity, and he looks for sobriety and dignity in his lay and clerical teachers. It is absurd to say that he has no sense of humour, but he likes humour and wit of the native brand, and has no predilection for rollicking drollery. Whereas Blackie wore his heart upon his sleeve, and gave

voice to what came uppermost, regardless of the company. He had little reverence and less self-regard for we would not say self-respect. No man ever showed less worldly wisdom or more scant consideration for the *convenances*, and there is a characteristic story in the biography of his canvassing the burgh electors to the Greek Professorship in Edinburgh in a costume and with a licence of speech that shocked those worthy tradesmen. He discussed cherished doctrines and time-honoured dogmas with a freedom which might have sent him to the stake in Calvinistic Geneva. His paradoxical enunciations as to the benefits and advantages of war seemed to set humanity and Christianity alike at defiance. The patriotic German war-songs he translated were pagan in their tone, and had those volatile verses of his been acknowledged by a young advocate at the Parliament House, they would have been fatal to any prospects of professional advancement. Yet Blackie was not only popular, but beloved by Scots of all creeds and opinions who might have been supposed to misunderstand and mistrust him. He was welcomed in manses by fervent divines who could have denounced his views from the pulpit as damnable. He sacrilegiously intruded on the seclusion of Highland deer forests, and had a cordial reception in the shooting lodges of the keen stalkers whose sport he might have spoiled. But, indeed, it was the same when he crossed the border, for he never changed his behaviour nor tempered his language. He would abuse college dons or school dignitaries to their faces—at least, he would abuse and ridicule their teaching and systems and he came off scatheless from encounters in which he was quietly suffered to have his say without provoking violent retort.

The fact is, there was something wonderfully sympathetic and earnest which disarmed anger and inspired regard. He was treated at once respectfully and tolerantly. If he talked nonsense, or rattled on heedlessly—as, to tell the truth, he often did, and more especially before mixed audiences on public platforms—it was only pretty Fanny's way. But, on the other hand, when he flashed out upon friend or opponent with the eloquent fire of profound conviction, the other was apt to be silenced if not convinced, and could only listen with admiration. So his shrewd countryfolk were soon persuaded that beneath an emotional and seemingly superficial temperament were deep mines of the qualities they most highly esteemed. He had a large share of practical common sense, and devoted himself to

practicable and impracticable objects with a thorough-going earnestness which invariably commanded a measure of success. Whether he was labouring to raise the standard of education, or striving to resuscitate a language which was dying a natural death, he enlisted support in unlooked-for quarters; and when it was a question of money he obtained handsome subscriptions from those who were lukewarm, or indifferent to his schemes. His very prejudices and crotchets chimed in with the Scottish humour. His paradoxes pleased them and exercised their friendly ingenuity. The fervour of his patriotism delighted them above all things—all the more that it was intensely local. He was a Scotchman first of all, and a Briton in a far less degree. Whilst he greatly doubted the wisdom of granting Home Rule to Ireland, he would have given Scotland that baneful gift, though his sober judgement must have told him that the gain would be purely sentimental, whereas the material losses would be great. He had but a slight infusion of Highland blood in his veins, yet he became more Celtic than the Celtic chieftains themselves. Blackie, in short, in our opinion, was the gifted and versatile creature of impulse, with the genius and earnestness which could achieve great things, but given to fritter away his powers by the irrepressible impulses of ill-regulated enthusiasm. His intellect and intellectual training were German; his spirit and fancy were Hellenic, but in heart and religious belief he was genuinely Scottish, and hence the sympathy he inspired to the north of the Tweed.

As we shall see, intellectually he was a self-made man. He had virtually regulated his own course of study, in obedience to his wayward tastes and inclinations. In that respect he may well be contrasted with Jowett. The almost simultaneous loss of two eminent men, who left lamentable blanks in their respective spheres, naturally invites a passing comparison. We have sketched Blackie as we have conceived him; and we may say that we had the advantage of his personal acquaintance. Though the two had obviously much in common—their passion for study, their unconventional expressions of opinion, and the heterodoxy which they somewhat ostentatiously paraded—Jowett is essentially Blackie's opposite. In the pregnant monograph by Mr. Tollemache he has been brought into the fullest possible light by a friend perhaps admitted further than any one to his inner confidence. Blackie wore no disguise; reserve was foreign to his nature, and those who ran up against

him might read him. But the innermost mind and the real opinions of the secretive Master of Balliol are still much of an enigma. Mr. Tollemache's notes and recollections suggest the idea of a Delphic oracle, giving utterance to dark and doubtful sayings, generally admitting of a double interpretation. Not unfrequently, like Johnson, he would seemingly speak to startle, and with sophistry and subtle paradox take up the weaker side when discussion was fairly set afoot. Perhaps it would have been well with him, as with Johnson, had he weighed his words more deliberately, for his opinions carried equal weight. Perhaps no man in the last half-century has exercised stronger influence on the flower of English culture. Men revered that phenomenal mind, not merely from a conviction of its power and grasp, but because they believed that Jowett understood himself, and that omniscience with his logical habits of thought should have brought him near to infallibility. It would be too much to say that he was insufficiently valued till he was gone; but after his death proof rapidly accumulated of the sway he had established over old and young, and of the reverence he had inspired in the most illustrious among his distinguished contemporaries. He was the most perfect fruit of English University training, systematically availing himself of its advantages, and he rose, in the natural course of things, to be the ideal autocrat among the *élite* of college dons. Though of humble birth, he seemed to have the hereditary talent of governing of the gifted Grand Seigneur. In dignity of demeanour, in deep and wide erudition, in incisive humour, in readiness of retort, and in the art of comprising a whole lecture in a single memorable apophthegm, he was unrivalled. But perhaps it was not the least of his many qualifications for his high place that he knew how to keep his own secrets, veiling doubts and weaknesses in oracular mystery. For, as Scott remarked of Reuben Butler, after all the man was mortal, and had been a schoolmaster. In this case we mean, of course, a college tutor. Where Blackie would have committed himself, Jowett was silent or reserved. It is only by collating the utterances which Mr. Tollemache's faithful memory has preserved that we can convict the subject of the memoir of inconsistencies. But we are induced to suspect that on vital questions that mighty mind was in a state of flux, and that the instinct of vividly viewing a question in all possible aspects suggested the doubts that were never satisfied. It would be hard indeed to say whether he could be fairly classed as Radical

or Conservative; and the most acute of his critics and familiars can only speculate as to his actual standpoint on revealed religion. In fact, the great English student was largely endowed with the Scottish caution in which the Scotchman was lacking. To Blackie all things were possible, and he simply followed the bent of the moment. Can we conceive Jowett lecturing on English song and the Percy Ballads to a mixed audience, chanting the merry refrains and illustrating them by the appropriate action? He was one who, in his ethical superiority, was inclined to pass over little things and concentrate all his faculties upon great objects.

What we have said of the Professor—for in Scotland Blackie was known as the Professor *par excellence*—will have led our readers to anticipate that he was original in the nursery and independent in boyhood. Never was the child more essentially the father of the man, and a shrewd observer might have forecast the general lines of his horoscope without risking character as a prophet. The child would go his own way, to the despair of anxious nurses, and the boy would only learn in the manner that chanced to please him. While still what pedants might have called a dunce, he was stirring up social revolution among his little sisters.

‘He refused to be weaned from the attic where he and his sisters revelled in improvised sports, sometimes theatrical, often oratorical. He filled the house with noise; a merry, kindly child, much liked by his nurses, whom he harangued from the top of a chest of drawers. His father was fond of Shakespeare, and John picked up scraps by ear, and delivered them in the nursery with abundant gesture. But the psalms and hymns, carefully administered on Sundays, found less response until the metrical version of the nineteenth psalm pleased his ear and he learnt it by heart.’

He stuck fast at the alphabet. Even glittering ivory letters, presented as a delightful toy, failed to tempt him, and he flung them out of the window. When he was sent to a small private school, apparently about the age of ten, he could neither read nor write. The sense of inferiority to his school-mates was a shock. He set himself to make up for lost time, and very soon surpassed them all, thanks to quickness of apprehension and a most tenacious memory, for emulation always acted on him as an irresistible spur. But the lighter accomplishments had no attraction for him; and his passion for everything Greek never extended to the classic dance. On one occasion his father dragged him forth from a cup-

board, and marched him off to the dancing class under uplifted cane; but these summary methods could not be persevered with, and the dancing was given up in despair. In those early days he never sat down to read. But then, as afterwards, he learned and studied, marching up and down through the house and chanting his tasks aloud. And to that time may be traced the springs of his overflow of patriotic fervour. Near his school, in the old-fashioned Nether Kirkgate of Aberdeen, was a statue of Wallace in a niche. Little Blackie came to regard it as a sacred image, and to worship it as the Russian peasant adores his ikon, although with very different intelligence. Memories of Wallace were naturally associated with those of Bruce, and his father used to take the boy on many a fishing expedition in picturesque Strathdon and on the banks of the Urie and the Deveron, where the feats and disasters of the struggle for Scottish independence still survived in ballad and tradition.

Precocious as the boy was, it sounds ludicrous in southern ears that he should have been sent to college at the age of twelve. It shows the low standard of educational acquirements at the period that he succeeded in winning a bursary, although the competitors must have exceeded a hundred. At that time, the students entering for the first season were made up of two classes. The great majority were mere children; the residue were grave but aspiring men who had saved by hard bodily labour, or possibly by teaching, sufficient to indulge themselves with a college curriculum. The general object of their modest ambition was a parish school, with the fainter hope, if they had fair luck and found a patron, of one day wagging their head in a pulpit. No wonder that Blackie in after years, when he had donned the professional gown, felt humiliated at having to ground schoolboys in the elements. No wonder that when his ardent spirit was damped by the breaking of clouds instead of garnering a harvest after fair preparation he threw himself with heart and soul into the work of raising the standard of university education.

After his college course the choice of a profession had to be considered. It was fortunate for the wayward and impulsive lad that he was blessed with a wise and indulgent father. The elder Blackie was a banker, a shrewd man of business, and he believed in worldly success or worldly fame as the *summum bonum*; but he also believed in his brilliant son, and had full reliance on his good sense and soundness of principle. He was satisfied that John must attain dis-

tion if he only struck into the right path. The difficulty was to decide upon the way he should go, and it must be confessed that his son tried him sorely. The occupation of an 'advocate' or attorney in Aberdeen was abandoned almost as soon as attempted. The future translator of *Æschylus* and *Goethe* could hardly be expected to settle down to deed-drawing and account-keeping, though we have a striking proof that poetry and legal business are not incompatible in the case of Sir Theodore Martin, who was the Professor's lifelong friend. When young Blackie was disgusted with the office and hesitating over a change, circumstances gave a new turn to his thoughts and threatened to alter the whole complexion of his character. Some sudden deaths caused him serious thoughts, and in its oscillations the moral pendulum was swung towards an extreme. Then for a time this world was nothing to him. The guide of his conduct was the thought of Burke: 'What shadows we are and what shadows we pursue!' Shakespeare and Burns were thrown aside for Boston, Blair, and John Bunyan. With all his thoughts on immortality and the future, it was natural he should leave law for divinity. His father made no objection. The Church offered an honourable and tolerably lucrative career, and John, with his eloquence and lively fancy, might make himself a name as a pulpit orator, and look to be Moderator of the General Assembly. But when John had gone to Edinburgh as a divinity student -- and at the age of sixteen -- these fair prospects were overcast. The youth became more fantastic than ever, and carried pious scruples to absurdity. In groping for the one narrow way, and in his morbid apprehension of missing it, he was always striking into side paths, and landing himself in *culs-de-sac*. He had betaken himself to fervent prayer, in season and out of season, but no divine direction seemed to be given. When he came home to Aberdeen in the recess his father was shocked and staggered. The frolicsome, joyous youth had lost all his fun and animal spirits; sedate, and shadowed by the pale cast of thought, he took everything with aggravating and excessive seriousness. That season of storm and stress, as his biographer observes, had done him one inestimable service. It had weaned him effectually from the follies of youth, and removed him beyond the range of its customary temptations. And in Aberdeen he found himself in an atmosphere ill fitted to spiritual exaltation. Miss Stoddart has described with great truth and knowledge the chilling deadness of the orthodox school of Scottish divines. Learning

they sometimes possessed to no inconsiderable degree; but they discussed dogma and ecclesiastical history, seldom preaching on the truths of revelation, and never appealing to the hearts of their hearers. The doctors of divinity to whom Blackie had been accustomed to look up were excellent moralists but emphatically 'Moderates.' Miss Stoddart quotes a student who, throughout a four years' course of lectures by the Professor of Divinity, had never once heard the name of Christ. Much to his father's relief, the youth sought counsel from one of those unemotional gentlemen, and the advice was the turning-point in his life. From a fanatic it was for a time to change him into a free-thinker, and ultimately he was to settle down into a creed of his own, which blended the broad religion of Humanity with the indelible impressions of his early Presbyterianism. The man he consulted was Dr. Forbes, the venerable minister of Old Machar, a versatile pluralist, who also filled the Latin and Chemistry chairs at King's College. He found his old friend characteristically seated between Horace and the Hebrew Scriptures. The doctor's prescription was curt and to the point. 'What have you to do with books of divinity? . . . Whence should a student of theology fetch his theology in preference to his Greek Testament?' Blackie laid the counsel to heart, and became his own interpreter of the letter of the Scriptures. He had been told by Dr. Forbes that his jacket wanted widening, and accordingly he went to Germany to widen it, with his father's cordial approval. Thenceforward, after his return, his theological opinions, like his ordinary clothes, always sat so loosely on him that they gave him no further uneasiness.

Education in Göttingen was cheap as in Aberdeen. The young Scottish student lived in luxury for twelve shillings a week, *tout compris*. But what chiefly delighted him was the intellectual change from fasting to feasting. Eloquent professors of European fame lectured to classes whom they expected to appreciate and assimilate their high culture. Effort was stimulated by the assumption that the students knew much of what the most of them were necessarily ignorant of. The system has its obvious disadvantages with lads of only mediocre ability. But it brought Blackie's mind into vigorous action, and first at Göttingen, as subsequently at Berlin, his views underwent amazing expansion. His father was delighted by the more secular and practical tone of the letters, and felt that his money was being well expended. In Germany his thoughtful and

speculative son had found a second Fatherland. He enjoyed the convivial meetings of the jovial *Bürschen*, and in patriotic sentiment became German as the Germans. He had sat at the feet of such masters as Heeren and Raumer, who instructed him in the philosophic examination of history. He had devoted himself to the study of Schiller and Goethe, and he always regretted that on a flying visit to Weimar modesty had prevented his paying his personal respects to the immortal genius he was to venture to interpret. But that in various ways was a memorable *Wandersommer*. Deserted by his guide, he lost his way on the Brocken, and saw the mystic scene of the spectral sabbath enveloped in fantastic wreaths of mist. The recollections served him well when he came to realise the sublime dramas of the 'Faust.' No less vivid in another way were the impressions left upon him by his walks through Thuringia to Eisenach and the Wartburg. The personality of the 'solitary monk' who shook the world' appealed to him as strongly as that of his masterful countryman Knox, and his admiration for the saintly reformers, ready to suffer or to die for conscience' sake, awakened his chivalrous sympathies for the persecuted Covenanters, whom he admired like any Calvinist or Cameronian.

But his jacket was being widened on all sides, and it was a second turning-point in his career when, at Berlin, he made the acquaintance of Neander. He had listened to the learned prelections in the class-room, but at a private gathering of the students Neander accosted him, questioning him as to Scottish theology. Rigid Sabbatarianism was in Scotland the crucial test of sincere piety. Neander said: 'You have some Jewish notions in Scotland with regard to 'the observance of the Lord's Day.' The youth muttered something unintelligible. Relating the interview, he writes: --

'I was startled to be told for the first time that one of the most significant observances of the Scottish religious men was not Christian but Jewish. At that time, to my mind, Scottish theology and Christianity were convertible terms, and the severe notions of my countrymen, forbidding not only work but amusement on the Sunday, a point on which they go beyond the letter and spirit of the original command, were so rooted in my mind that I could on no account go to the theatre or the opera on a Sunday.' He adds, 'But I never had reason to regret my conscientiousness. Whatever is not of faith is of sin.'

No doubt that is so, and he was staggered at first by the conflict of the great scholar's authority with the convictions

he had imbibed with his mother's milk. But the authoritative dictum led him to anxious meditation, and his conversion to more liberal opinions must have been rapid, for before he left Berlin he had begun to frequent the theatres. Long afterwards, in a speech at a public dinner in Edinburgh he shocked the sanctimonious by proposing the toast of the Modern Drama, 'especially in union with the Christian Church.' It was flattering that Neander should cultivate the acquaintance, and there is one amusing record of a conversation which shows the illustrious historian's sense of humour. Discussing satirically the teaching of the extreme Rationalistic school, which took all possible liberties with the text of Scripture in order to rob it of its spiritual significance, he quoted Dr. Paulus on the Saviour's visit to Bethany. He described how Paulus treated the 'one thing needful' alluded to by our Lord in His gentle admonition to Martha: 'Dear Martha, you have indeed shown a laudable diligence in preparing a meal for me. I take it very kind, but you have neglected one dish which is better than all the rest: this you must now make ready.' Neander added: 'What this dish was, Paulus, who is fond of good eating, knows best.'

Besides the more important results of his residence in the German universities, there is another which should not pass unnoticed. We said he had found a second Fatherland, and no one of his Teutonic comrades was more fervid in German patriotism. The sacks, sieges, and massacres of the devastating thirty and ten years' wars had neither interest nor attraction for him. He went back to the heroic war-songs which celebrated the struggles for freedom, when the Germans were fighting for their swamps and forests against the arms of victorious Rome, and when Augustus had plaintively to ask, 'O Varus, where are my legions?' Those who have heard the professor in after years chant the praises of Herman, in stentorian voice and with appropriate gesture, will not soon forget the performance. Now he had been permitted to extend his travels to Italy. Neander had given him an introduction to Bunsen, who exercised even a greater influence over him, for with Bunsen he formed a lasting friendship, sustained by frequent correspondence. Italy does not seem to have impressed him like Germany or Greece, nor did the Capitol awaken such associations as the Acropolis. The Roman poets had never greatly fascinated him, nor indeed is it conceivable that the sort of genius which adores Homer and Æschylus should equally appreciate Virgil,

Horace, and Catullus. He cared as little for the petty feuds of the tyrants and nobles of mediæval Italy as for the campaigns of Wallenstein or the Great Frederick. What interested him more were the sylvan haunts of the nymphs and naiads, and the scenes of semi-mythical battles between Romans and Etruscans. Yet, with Horace and Virgil for his handbooks, he rambled through the picturesque solitudes of the Campagna and the Sabine Hills, and pushed his wanderings further into the wilder solitudes of the Apennines. At the same time he was preparing for the duties of the Humanity Chair by a conscientious study of Roman antiquities; and it was then, by the way, that his attention was first directed to what he deemed the veritable pronunciation of Greek. At first, notwithstanding his reforming enthusiasm at Eisenach, he was attracted by the splendid and imposing ritual of the Romish Church. His religious opinions were still unsettled, and it may have been the sublime frescoes of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel that tended towards the old gloomy preoccupation as to death, judgement, and eternal damnation. But he had always the fortune to find counsellors and comforters in his extremity, and now the wise Bunsen came to the rescue, as Dr. Forbes and Neander had done. Had he not recognised authority approaching infallibility in the men whose intellect he revered, in his fear of being misled by wandering lights he might have drifted to Catholicism, like Dryden.

As it was, he came home after his long absence a Radical and almost a revolutionary in politics, with a strong dash of Conservatism; heterodox and undecided in his religious views, though nevertheless a sincere believer. On the land question he was already something of a fanatic. Already he was inclined to adapt the conditions of the small peasant farmers of fertile Tuscany to those of the Highland crofters, who starved on their barren holdings. But his instincts and vocation were literary before all else, and he made it his immediate interest to promote the study in Scotland of the great German classics. Passing through London, he had met Lockhart and Coleridge. Doubtless he had spoken to them of his enthusiasm for Schiller and Goethe. The way had already been prepared by eloquent and enthusiastic admirers of the German dramatists. Lockhart, Wilson, and the eccentric but gifted Gillies, who enlisted the assistance of Scott for the '*Foreign Review*,' which he owned and edited, had made their cultured countrymen familiar with

the beauties and sublimity of contemporary German literature. It was characteristic of Blackie that even in translations he soared a singularly audacious flight. Nothing could be more difficult to interpret and render into significant yet attractive English than the mystical 'Faust,' except, perhaps, the solemn magnificence of the tragedies of *Æschylus*. To say that he succeeded would be to assert that a novice had fathomed the bottomless and achieved the impossible. But he showed sound common sense in his manner of undertaking the work. He wisely shunned the perils of a too literal interpretation. His professed purpose was to convey the spirit of the original, and there, in our opinion, he was far from failing, especially in the sparkling scenes of student life and in the rustic manners with which his wanderings had familiarised him. In no translation do the stanzas go off more trippingly than those in which he describes the village dance, honoured by the condescending presence of the learned doctor. The subsequent attempt on *Æschylus* was even more venturesome. He had selected the most sublime of the immortal trinity of Greek tragedians. The grand strophes of the chorus of elders were the crucial test, and his version, although sometimes disfigured by familiar ejaculations, shows the delicate vibrations of a sympathetic fancy and no ordinary power of harmonious melody. To grapple fairly with the most formidable of the Greek poets is simply impossible, but even for the culminating scene of the fatal sacrifice he had generous praise from competent critics. In fact, in the free rendering of these Grecian and German masterpieces fervour and genuine poetic sympathy go far more than pedantic exactness and profound erudition. Following the spirit rather than the letter, notwithstanding many a glaring fault, he gave evidence of force, fire, and flexibility.

Now, having definitely renounced all idea of the Church, he went in seriously for reading for the Bar. We can scarcely conceive any profession in which he was predestined to more hopeless failure. There was nothing of the legal dry-as-dust in his nature, he was no severe logician, and his habits and tastes set the formalities at defiance. The looseness of the jacket, let out in Germany, scandalised the Writers to the Signet and the solicitors who have the disposal of briefs. Even Scott and Jeffrey had discovered that a predilection for letters is a sad stumbling-block to the man who would make money by the law. Blackie, who was bound to write in some way, laboured on

in desultory fashion, dissatisfied and discouraged. Much of his time was occupied by the contributions to periodicals, to which he looked forward as his sole means of support, for the period of a fixed parental allowance was on the point of expiring. He was not altogether misspending his time. He formed valuable friendships in the best society of the Scottish capital, and he made many an interesting excursion to the romantic scenes of Scottish history and the homes and haunts of the Scottish poets. But his letters to relatives in Aberdeen are full of mourning and complaining: he declares that he has not the qualities which conduce to eminence at the Bar, and his complacent father had a final experience of the instability and indecision of his brilliant son.

For fortunately his career was at last decided, and again it was the much-enduring father who energetically came to his aid. A chair of Humanity was to be established in the Marischal College—strangely enough, Latin had hitherto been neglected—and young Blackie obtained the appointment, against formidable competitors, chiefly through vigorous local wirepulling. The question of an indispensable preliminary signature of the Westminster Confession of Faith tried his conscience sorely. He came to the compromise of a subtle dialectician, which saved the principle and gained the chair, by signing under protest by public advertisement. Yet, though the coveted prize was won, he was still, financially, in troubled waters. The chair was far from being comfortably padded. The class fees were wretchedly small, and he had to squabble for some increase of the scanty salary. Moreover, he was about to multiply his cares, for a long engagement, stubbornly opposed by the lady's family, was to end in what was to prove a singularly happy marriage. It must be confessed that few suitors could have seemed less eligible. His manners were unconventional as his dress, he had no regular income, and his prospects were of the most doubtful. Moreover, there had been a characteristic interlude, when he had fallen passionately in love with another young woman. That, however, was the affair of the lady; and now that the material objections were cleared away, there was no serious obstacle to the union. It is certain that he never did a wiser thing, nor had his wife any reason to regret his step. The biographer, who knew them well, has painted a delightful picture of a happy *ménage*. The well-mated couple thoroughly understood each other. The gifted wife, who

loved more heartily than she admired, exercised an unobtrusive controlling influence on the vagaries of her more gifted husband; and with his sage submission to the quiet worldly wisdom of his household Egeria there never seems to have arisen the shadow of a misunderstanding.

No man thought less of money than Blackie, and, so long as he could comfortably pay his way, the amount of his income was a matter of indifference. But the thorn that troubled him in the Humanity chair was the drudgery and humiliation of teaching schoolboys. The boys, who were not yet in their teens, came up from remote parochial schools to sit and gape stupidly on the college benches. So far as they had learned any Latin at all, it was to make a prosaic and grammatical translation into English, which might enable them to gain the indispensable bursary. Children like these were in the great majority. Nor were their more earnest seniors much more sympathetically impressionable. These were stolid men, often middle-aged, who had been saving and hoarding laboriously by teaching, by field labour, sometimes by a season of the herring fishing, that they might lay in the small store of learning which they hoped might advance them in life. Estimable as they were, their Professor might, for the most part, labour in vain to warm them with his own classical enthusiasm. We can sympathise, if we look on this picture and on that. Contrast the fiery scholar pacing his cramped rooms like a caged hyena—it was the greatest attraction to him when he changed to an old-fashioned tenement in old Aberdeen, into a room over thirty feet long, where he had free space for his stride—declaiming, gesticulating, and venting his classical fervour; contrast him with the impassive and untutored dunces whom it was his business to ground in the elements of grammar. We dwell upon that dreary time and upon the seething of his suppressed feelings, because it was then he was stirred to the great undertaking of his life—to the elevation of the standards of university education. But his activity was never to be restrained within the range of his actual duties. It was then he delivered his first public lecture. The chilly intellectual atmosphere of Aberdeen has since been greatly modified, and it was a hazardous experiment to take for his subject ‘*The Principles of Poetry and the Fine Arts.*’ But his first appearance on the platform was an unexpected success.

‘My lecture . . . was a decided hit. There’s for you! Platonism preached to the hard granite ears of Aberdeen, and with applause!’

I was a little proud of the achievement. And such an audience, overflowing. Three cheers for the little professor. Hurrah !'

'He read this lecture, but was sensible of the "bondage of the paper," and it set him thinking on the whole subject of public oratory.

'I have been set upon a new scent this week (he wrote), and my ambition has got a new push. It was the lecture, I think, that did it. I will not be satisfied now till I become a great public speaker. I have gone to Calvert, our elocutionist, and am studying his art of speaking and reading, and mean to educate myself for a lecturer. The field of good here open for me is immense. I see no bound to it.'

Had he been a man who greatly cared for the dignity of his reputation and for posthumous fame, it may well be doubted whether the new departure was a happy one. That it helped the founding of objects he had deeply at heart there can be no question whatever. For in the eloquence that opens hearts and purses he had much in common with Macdonald, the minister of Blairgowrie, whose stirring appeal once moved the Professor to an immediate donation of 5*l.*, and who did more than any other half-dozen men to raise a sustentation fund for the seceding Free Church.

The vacancy in the Greek chair at Edinburgh transferred him to the most congenial of possible spheres. We have already alluded to the preliminary obstacles which the free and easy manner of the candidate gratuitously aggravated. They were triumphantly surmounted, thanks to the assistance of staunch friends with a firm faith in his capabilities for the post. To his friends he had communicated his own enthusiasm, and with what fervour they toiled for him is shown in a letter from Mr. Daniel Wilson, which might have been written by himself: 'Three cheers and three times three—Blackie for ever! After three days of intense anxiety and excitement, I cannot think of sitting down to my regular jogtrot work till I have reached out my arm to Aberdeen and had a hearty shake with our professor. Long life and health and happiness to you and your true-hearted wife, who hoped with us to the last against hope.' In Edinburgh, where he was well known already, he had a warm welcome. The leaders of the movement for progress in university education hailed the advent of a zealous champion. They looked to his professorship as sure to give practical illustrations of the value of reforming energy, wisely directed. Nor were they disappointed. With broad knowledge and strongly pronounced views, he devoted himself from the first to what he recognised as his mission. In anything that he advocated he was his own most earnest

proselyte. Pronunciation and accentuation naturally took precedence of everything else, and he lost no time in publishing a small volume on these subjects. As he wrote elsewhere:—

‘The conclusions to which I came were simple and certain. The Scottish pronunciation and the English were alike founded on a historical tradition standing on a philological basis. The Scotch, by their more happy preservation of the Catholic pronunciation of Continental nations, happened to be mainly in the right, while the English happened to be altogether in the wrong. As to accentuation, how it came I do not know; my countrymen were not a whit better than their southern neighbours. Both had, partly out of sheer carelessness, partly from some imagined metrical difficulties, convinced themselves that it was a rational and scholarlike practice to hold as not written the real Greek accents which are carefully printed on every word of every Greek book by a continuous tradition from the Alexandrian grammarians, and to adopt the Latin accentuation instead.’

The accentuation always grated on his ear, but his voice was as one crying in the wilderness. ‘Nobody,’ he moans, ‘disputed my doctrine, but few or none followed my practice.’ The sense of duty, with the relief of more easy circumstances, induced him to carry on his own education. He was desirous to study the dialects and pronunciation of modern Greece, and, as he had already undertaken the translation of Homer, to make himself personally acquainted with the nurseland of the poet. Accordingly, in the spring of 1853 he left the modern for the ancient Athens. In pleasure and in profit he was well repaid. He writes to his wife from Athens:—

‘I am learning many things. . . . What has delighted me most is the natural and strikingly dramatic character of the people and their mode of life. I have a hundred times fancied myself in the midst of some strange melodrama. The dresses of the people are so various and picturesque, the gait of the Greeks and Albanese has something in it so noble and kingly, the contour of their features is often so fine, the expression of the face, now blithe and generous, grand and open—now dark, scowling, and savage—the whole so lively, easy, natural, and unconstrained, that to a person just slipped from the leading-strings of cold Edinburgh proprieties and etiquettes, the sensation of strange rich naturalness was magical. Many of the men whom I see give a living idea of a Homeric Agamemnon or Ajax, while others again are like the murderers in “Macbeth” or “Richard,” and a great deal more ferocious, cutthroat faces, and yet not without a certain rude grandeur of their own.’

No doubt that delightful visit to Greece gave new life and dramatic force to his desultory prelections from the

Chair. As his biographer admits, opinions as to the success of his teaching varied widely. We should be inclined to think that he did excellent work with the most intelligent, but that he failed in whipping up the dullards and the laggards. Not that he hesitated to stoop to a lower intelligence, or spared himself in any way.

‘He grudged no trouble in the class room, or out of it, to help those who wished to help themselves; he encouraged such by gifts, not only of books, but of his leisure; and more particularly those who were both diligent and poor found him ready to supplement in the evening, and at his own house, the instruction of the morning . . . with the loan of books to which otherwise they could have no access, and above all with the frank and hearty respect which their industry inspired in him.’

Saturated with the Greek spirit as he was himself, he naturally communicated to those who had any spark of his own fire and genius something of his own enthusiasm. On the other hand, we have been told by one of his ablest students that not unfrequently they ‘would be driven nearly ‘wild’ by his persistency in enforcing his peculiar ideas, in season and out of season, especially in the effort to combine respect both for quantity and accent. And as to that, by the way, it has been almost conclusively demonstrated by highly competent classical scholars, that the conciliation is absolutely impossible. One argument against the accentual pronunciation of modern Greek may be based on the reference to the strophes and antistrophes of a chorus. They correspond, syllable for syllable, in quantity. Their uniformity must therefore have been evident to the audience, and must have been meant to serve a purpose which would have been defeated if such uniformity had not been observed. But if the strophes and antistrophes are pronounced as a modern Greek would pronounce them, the accent and the quantity are more often at variance than not: consequently and clearly they would never have been composed had the ancient Greeks pronounced as the modern. We have remarked repeatedly on his indifference to his dignity, and as to that Miss Stoddart tells a capital story:—

‘One of his best men was an Irishman called Geogheghan, a word which the professor decided should be pronounced *Gawan*. This gentleman came constantly to the assistance of the duller sort, but resented the liberty taken with his name, which he pronounced *Gaigan*. One day, when called upon to read he kept silence. “Gawan,” repeated the Professor, without response. “Gaigan, you dour deevil, will you read?” he cried, and Geogheghan leapt to his feet with alacrity.’

Each year, after he had his home in Edinburgh, he made a walking expedition in some romantic district of Scotland. In that roving taste he resembled his old master, Professor Wilson, and the wiry professor of Greek was almost as good a pedestrian as the stalwart Christopher. Both went to work much in the same way—in the lightest possible marching order, and with philosophical indifference as to their quarters. But Christopher North was the keenest of sportsmen: he lays the early scenes of the 'Noctes' at the Thane's in Mar Forest, and revels in recollections of August days on the moors of Dalnacardoch and Dalwhinnie, and of angling in spring on the Tweed and its tributaries. Blackie knew nothing of sport, and took the side of tourist and peasant against proprietor and preserver with even more than his wonted ardour. As usual, enthusiasm carried him too far, and he was more sentimental than practical in his sympathies. Recent investigations have made it evident that the crofters were often atrociously rackrented. But when Blackie saw the remains of deserted hamlets in some lonely glen, his pulses were throbbing with unconsidered indignation. He strode forward through heather and over rock and stone, composing and chanting aloud the invective and lament which were to be published and obtain a wide circulation. He forgot that sheep paid better than goats and black cattle, and deer in many cases better than either. He forgot that the free influx of Southern gold gave comfort to the few who were left in the seats of the miserable many, and that the children of the exiles who might have gone on starving in their sterile glens were happy and prosperous in America or Australia. For himself, neither fear of legal consequences nor consideration for the deerstalkers could deter him from trespass on the forest sanctuaries. He resolved to climb the Buchaillemore from Glencoe. The landlord, whose principles were as fixed as the Professor's, refused to find him a guide. 'But the Professor, if he feared God, certainly regarded not man, so, with the wonted stick in his hand and a parting intimation to the gamekeeper that his name was John Stuart Blackie, and that he would answer to the Court of Session for his doings, he started for the top and won a cloudless view.' He was not prosecuted, but that, we may say, was simply owing to the forbearance of the shooting tenants.

Akin to his sentimental affection for the banished Celt was his love for the dying Gaelic. A mere accident and the chance analogy of a word which happened to strike him

engaged his interest as a philologist, and he resolved to devote himself to further research. That the substitution of the language of the Empire and of the Anglo-Saxon race for a moribund form of speech that was only locally intelligible was an unmixed benefit to the inhabitants of the remote islands and highlands cannot be doubted. It levelled the barriers which condemned them to back-of-the-world seclusion and penury. Yet there was much to be said for the strong feeling of many Scotchmen that the extinction of the Gaelic speech would be a serious loss to philology. Efforts had been made for the endowment of a Celtic chair in Edinburgh University. But the sum wanted was 12,000*l.*, and there seemed to be small prospect of its being collected. In a happy hour Blackie was persuaded to become the champion of the cause. For four years it occupied much of his time and most of his thoughts. He stumped England as well as Scotland, and held forth fervently upon platforms; he gave the fund the profits of many a lecture, he paid innumerable visits, he wrote endless letters, and appeared in the unfamiliar character of the most unblushing of beggars. He never scrupled to lay a snare to entrap the generous or the grudging. And the upshot was that mainly owing to him the chair was founded, endowed, and satisfactorily filled by a highlander as enthusiastic on the subject as himself.

Walks in the Highlands had incited him to his Celtic crusade, and that led him, in the way of business, into very different scenes and society. In these four eventful years he paid frequent visits to the South, and made many acquaintances in all ranks and circles, from her Majesty and the Royal Princesses downwards. His calm imperturbability never failed, and, like Burns, whom he so greatly admired, he always went on the principle that 'a man's a man for a' 'that.' The frank and manly familiarity was never mistaken for presumption. There is a story, though it is said to want confirmation, that, in a moment of genial *abandon*, he patted the Princess Louise on the shoulder, addressing her paternally as 'my bonnie lassie.' It is more certain that, when commanded to Inverary to meet the Queen, he went forward philosophically in his weather-worn walking suit, although his luggage had been left behind. As it happened, the portmanteau turned up in time; had it been otherwise it would have been much the same to the Professor. As for anything like 'donnism' or scholastic starch, it always acted on the professorial free lance like scarlet on a bull; and we fancy some of his interviews with the head masters

of great English schools, when gathering lights as to systems of education, must have been rich materials for comedy. He respected the learning and the genius of such men as Whewell or Jowett, yet he took a boyish delight in scandalising them. It was the skirmishing of light horse round the solidity of heavy cavalry formation. For example, he goes to breakfast with Mr. Gladstone:—

‘Present were his fair lady and daughter, Whewell of Trinity and his lady, before whom I exclaimed emphatically about the absurdity of English pronunciation of Greek and Latin, Gladstone being distinctly on my side, and the Cambridge don more than half. I told him roundly that the English schoolmasters were as hard-hided as a rhinoceros, and utterly impenetrable to reason, nature, and common sense. The Lord Advocate, who was present, told me he was perfectly delighted with the manner in which I walked round the mighty Cambridge don. I did not mean to do anything of the kind; but of all exhibitions of poor, pretentious humanity, donnism is to me the most odious.’

One Sunday he went, when in London, to hear two very different divines:—

I heard Jowett in the forenoon. . . . The sermon was from Acts x. 34 and 35, a ‘regular broad-church text, as broad as the world, and by the learned preacher made to include the Vedic hymns, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, what not—very instructive. . . . In the evening I went to hear Baboo Chunder Sen, who chose pretty much the same text, and enlarged in the fashionable style on toleration, charity, and no opinions in particular.’

In Edinburgh he sat for long regularly under Dr. Guthrie, whose rhetorical eloquence and fertility of illustration greatly attracted him. He took his place in the elders’ pew beneath the pulpit, bowing his head reverently during the prayers. But to the last, as it need not be said, he was still absolutely unsectarian. In striking and aggressive contrast to the creed of his countrymen, he could never be brought to admit that he was a sinner.

‘He protested that he was nothing of the sort. He detested the coarser forms of sin, his charity was known of all men, his sincerity and courage were unassailable, and he rather claimed for virtue such bluntness, inconsiderateness, and self-assertion as constituted his admitted failings. To him they were part of the panoply with which Providence had armed him for the battle of life. It was, however, as a protest against the grovelling confessions of sin peculiar to sectarian Calvinism which failed to stimulate the sinner to walk uprightly, that he emphasised this view of his own.’

We have quoted that passage, not only as illustrating Blackie’s religious attitude, but as a suggestive example of

the biographer's sympathetic yet discriminating analysis. With Blackie the religious sentiment and the general belief in revelation were founded on the early education which reason had subsequently strengthened into conviction. Had he persevered in his intention of entering the Church, he would certainly have seceded with the Free Kirk folk, and possibly rivalled Guthrie as a moving and popular preacher. Indeed he did preach on occasions. He passed a Sunday at the hospitable castle of Kylemore when touring in Connemara. 'I had a kindly whim to deliver to the 'sentient people a sermon.' So, leading off with praise and prayer, he delivered a discourse from Hebrews on the inevitable harmony of faith and works—a harmony of which he was the living example.

Philosophical religion had fortified him against disappointment. In 1865 he had completed the translation of Homer, which he regarded as his most important work. The mortification must have been extreme when it was declined by Mr. Murray, and afterwards by the leading London booksellers. Yet he could write while he must still have been smarting: 'Whether or not I shall be judged to have made any trustworthy contribution to the translated literature of my country, the man who has spent twelve years of honest toil in the study of Homer has already received the better part of his reward.' As Miss Stoddart acutely remarks, 'No words of those who knew him could well better portray his constant attitude towards work and relatively towards success. The superficial effusive enjoyment of popularity which led observers to credit him with vanity, was but the honest experience of what little vanity he had.' As for the Homer, which was published in Edinburgh, perhaps from old associations we have always thought he made a happy choice in adopting the ballad couplet, and the martial measures of old Chapman. The sonorous metre seems to harmonise with the rolling of the war chariots, the clashing of the spears, and the shouts of the combatants in the heroic conflict where the gods of Olympus came down to mingle with Trojan and Greek. But all that time and to the last his pen was never idle. On his deathbed, and when his life was being counted by hours, he proposed an article to Blackwood on one of his pet subjects. In a succession of small volumes he had brought out lays of the *Bürschen* and songs of the Highlands, lay sermons, religious sonnets, and essays economical and educational. He wrote a biography of Burns, his favourite Scottish poet, and he was an habitual

contributor to 'Blackwood' and other periodicals. His indefatigable industry never relaxed, till in 1882 he was attacked by serious illness and afflicted besides by temporary blindness. He recovered, but the warnings were not to be disregarded. It must have been a sad day when he received a letter from his doctor, couched in most kindly and considerate terms, but virtually ordering him to give up his professorship. For with Blackie's conscientious nature there could be no option. If he were pronounced unfit for his post, it was time to retire. 'It is characteristic of his alert judgement and essential reasonableness that he accepted the advice without demur, and a few days later sent in his resignation.'

The lightening of his burdens gave immediate relief, and undoubtedly prolonged his days. He could still amuse himself with congenial pursuits without the sense of pressure. Again he visited the East, and as he had formerly enjoyed the scenes on the Nile and studied the archæology of Egypt in its monuments, now he travelled to Constantinople and delighted himself in the beauties of the Bosphorus and the busy commercial life of Galata and Stamboul. We could linger with pleasure and for long on what might be called the gossip side of the book, where the biographer with intimate personal knowledge goes into characteristic domestic detail. For it all shows us the veritable man, beloved and admired by those who had exceptional opportunities of estimating him. Miss Stoddart can tell of many a deed of unostentatious charity, and she surmises much more than she can speak of with certainty. But it was notorious that he regarded the cheques he received for periodicals as a fund to be distributed for the benefit of others. She has fond recollections of the bright life in the domestic circle, where frank and free-handed hospitality was exercised, in his houses in Edinburgh and in the Highlands. For he had made himself a home on the heights of Oban, looking across to the brown hills of Mull, and thither came many a guest of celebrity, always sure of a hearty welcome. As there were dinners and suppers in Edinburgh—intellectual symposia like those of the 'Noctes Ambrosianæ,' though the joviality was less obstreperous, so there were picnics from Oban to some sequestered glen or to some shattered fortalice overhanging the sea lochs or the Sound. We might quote at length from the letters to his wife, lively, loving, absolutely unreserved, and the best justification of the wisdom of what was called a most imprudent marriage. To follow

him in his various activity after he left the Greek chair would only be, in some sort, a repetition of what has been said already. He was interested as ever in educational progress, and still his energy translated itself into speech, writing, and action. In 1894 he drew up a brief retrospect of what he had done in that direction, and of what he had endeavoured to do; and it was a record he might regard with justifiable satisfaction. The end of that busy career stole upon him almost insensibly. The Hellenic Society, which he had founded, was meeting at his house in late December, reading and discussing the 'Promethean Bard.' On Christmas he entertained a pleasant luncheon party. 'But that evening the asthma returned and lasted sixteen hours, so the next day he could speak but one word at a time . . . this weakness is pitiable, and the mind continuing very active, he wonders why he can do so little.' It is needless to dwell on the melancholy suspense of the last few weeks. Those familiar with the refined charm of his face can well understand that with the steady failure of physical power 'he looked already like a spirit.' On March 2 he passed peacefully away at the great age of eighty-five; his last conscious action was a fond farewell to his wife, and the last words on the lips of the poet and the Scottish patriot were 'The Psalms of David and the songs of Burns, but the Psalmist first.'

- ART. X.—1. *England's Darling*. By ALFRED AUSTIN. London and New York: 1896.
2. *Poems*. By FRANCIS THOMPSON. Fifth edition. London: 1895.
3. *Sister Songs: an Offering to Two Sisters*. By FRANCIS THOMPSON. London: 1895.
4. *Odes and other Poems*. By WILLIAM WATSON. London: 1895.
5. *The Father of the Forest, and other Poems*. By WILLIAM WATSON. London: 1895.
6. *The Purple East*. By WILLIAM WATSON. London: 1896.
7. *Iyrics*. By ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON. London and New York: 1895.
8. *Poems, Dramatic and Lyrical*. Second series. By LORD DE TABLEY. London: 1895.
9. *Ballads and Songs*. By JOHN DAVIDSON. London: 1894.
10. *Fleet Street Eclogues*. By JOHN DAVIDSON. First and second series. London: 1896.
11. *Poems and Sonnets*. By F. R. STATHAM. London: 1895.
12. *New Poems*. By CHRISTINA ROSSETTI. London and New York: 1896.
13. *The Humours of the Court*. By ROBERT BRIDGES. Boston: 1893.

THE office of Poet Laureate has at last been filled up, and in a manner which seems to indicate that the poets who posed for the election knew what they were about, and that official theory as to the requirements for the office and the duties incident to it, has reverted to the old lines. Since the appointment of Wordsworth, who stipulated that his duties should be merely nominal, we had got into the habit of regarding the Laureateship as a recognition of poetic genius, an official tribute to the poet who, as far as the best judgement of his contemporaries could decide, might be fairly regarded as the first poet of his day. The unique position occupied by the late Laureate confirmed the public mind in this idea; and though Tennyson did not, like his predecessor, entirely shrink from recognising any duties as a 'bard,' and did write two or three occasional poems, possibly by request, there is no doubt that he might have

declined even these semi-official acts of poesy if he had chosen. And this is the reasonable view of the matter from the standpoint of the present day. The office of Poet Laureate was instituted at a time when *vers d'occasion* were a fashion, and it was considered a part of the proper furnishing of a Court that there should be a Court poet ready to turn copies of verses to grace any special event in the royal household. We have ceased to regard this kind of performance as contributing much to the dignity of a Court; we have learned to recognise (or we thought we had) that poetry written to order for official occasions is not likely to contribute much to the dignity of literature, and indeed that the very position of Poet Laureate, under the old *régime*, was, as Gray plainly said, and as Wordsworth obviously recognised, only calculated to bring the poet into contempt. By treating the appointment as a formal tribute to exceptional poetic genius, and bestowing it successively on two men who were certainly the leading English poets in their respective generations, we had succeeded in clothing it with a dignity and worth which it never had before. Upon the advice, apparently, of the Premier,* who in this matter might well have followed the example of his predecessor, we have gone back to the old order of things. The most gifted poets of the day have been passed over, and the appointment bestowed on a writer who seems to have recommended himself by being 'on the right side' in politics, and by a readiness (displayed only too prominently) to turn out a respectable copy of verses on any occasion that might present itself for such celebration, and who seems content to accept these doubtful bays at the cost of becoming the laughing-stock of the best educated class of his countrymen. The Laureate is no longer the poet honoured by the best mind of the nation; he is once more the Lord Chamberlain's Court official. The spectacle is rather a sad one. The only consolation is that, considering some of the names which were said to have been, for some incomprehensible reason, 'in the running,' we may be thankful that we did not see an even worse appointment. As it is, the new Laureate is a mediocre poet, and a respectable and amiable man—and that is about all that can be said.

* As has been before pointed out in these pages, the appointment of the Poet Laureate, as a Court official, rests formally with the Lord Chamberlain; but there is no doubt that it is considerably influenced by the head of the Government for the time being.

Mr. Alfred Austin appears to have had his patriotic poem ready for the occasion ; at all events, the immediate appearance of 'England's Darling' just after the notification of the appointment seems something more than fortuitous. In the true spirit of a Court poet, he has dedicated the drama of which King Alfred is the hero to the Princess of Wales, 'daughter of vanished Vikings and mother of English kings 'to be'—a direct appeal to the conscience of the loyal Briton. The poem may be characterised generally as a choice example of Tennyson-and-water. In inheriting a laurel very much greener from the brows of his great predecessor, Mr. Austin seems to have thought it incumbent upon him to produce the same kind of article, and to dower his country with an historical English drama on the lines of 'Harold.' He has thrown over a form of quasi-dramatic poem which he had made his own, and of which the best example, 'Fortunatus the Pessimist,' may claim to be both a pretty and original production of its kind, and has made an almost ludicrously obvious attempt to reproduce the form and characteristics of the Tennysonian drama, even down to the introduction of the rural lyrics and the small talk of the lower order of personages. Now Tennyson was certainly not at his best in drama ; he had dramatic moments, but his genius was not dramatic, and 'Harold,' as we observed at the time of its appearance,* is essentially epic rather than dramatic. But in spite of some weak passages—in spite of the anachronisms of the modern Protestantism of Harold and the modern High-Churchism of Edith—the poem left powerful impressions behind it. Many a reader of it might well feel that he had acquired a new and vivid mental picture of the formidable personality of 'the bastard of Falaise,' a stronger impression of the fateful character for this country of the fight at Senlac. The new Laureate attempts to conjure up spirits with the wand of his predecessor, but they will not come at his call. He brings Alfred the Great and his times no nearer to us ; his king is but a dressed-up stage figure, the mouthpiece for moral reflections. The whole style of the book, like the smile of the Heathen Chinee, is 'childlike and bland.' We commence, in the orthodox fashion, with the general conversation between minor characters which lets us into the state of the country,

* *Edinburgh Review*, April 1877, 'The Dramas of Alfred Tennyson.'

and how the marauding Danes are looting the monasteries—

‘ And tearing from the abbot’s tonsured brow
Alb, stole, and chasuble.’

It will be news to ecclesiologists that these articles were at that period worn as headgear, even if they can understand how the tonsure could be applied to the abbot’s ‘brow.’ These and other enormities arouse the indignation of Ethelred :—

‘ The outlandish dogs,
Uprooting Egbert’s England, and afresh
Untwisting what he has bound, and to their will
Enserfing all.

Ethelnoth.

Nay, Ethelred, not all !

ALL BUT ALFRED THE KING !’

The reader will please observe the capitals. It is a nice point thus to underline the first reference to your hero ; just as, in serio-comic opera, the side-drums are rattled when the great man is to come on. In truth, Mr. Austin has been unfair to himself in that little bit of claptrap, for pretentiousness and over-acted vigour are not the special defects of the poem as a whole. What strikes one rather is its serene level of unvarying dulness. It cannot boast even of picturesque defects. The versification is almost throughout smooth and equable, and the moral sentiments irreproachable ; many excellent copybook headings might be culled from among them. Occasionally there is an obvious bid for the applause of the gallery, in the shape of ‘ texts ‘ for the times,’ such as—

‘ Who holds the sea perforce doth hold the land,
And who lose that must lose the other too ;’

or the prophecy of the future greatness of England which winds up the poem. Patriotism, however, is not poetry ; and these appeals to the ‘jingo’ element in the national character cannot blind the discerning reader to the fact that—whether the scene depicts the love-making of Edward and Edgiva, or the talk of Alfred with the latter, or the Witenagemote, or the final discomfiture of the Danish invaders—the thought and diction are alike tame to the verge of absolute puerility. The subject is a fine one, and the poet no doubt means well : ‘ but for Alisander, alas, you ‘ see how ’tis ; a little o’er-parted.’ That Alfred, as an heroic figure in English history, has been unaccountably neglected

in English poetry, as Mr. Austin urges in his preface, may be true enough; but it would have been small satisfaction to the king who at that early period did his best to promote the study of letters among his people, to have foreseen that in these latter days the irony of fate and a Poet Laureate was to make him the central figure in a piece of literary namby-pamby.

If it seem unkind to speak so plainly, the unkindness is in a measure forced upon us by the present state of literary criticism. When, two or three years ago, the plain truth was spoken in these pages in regard to some poetical windbags of the day, there was much wrath among the circle of those who make a business of reviewing each other's books, with murmurings about 'cruelty to poets,' and so forth. Perhaps this tenderness for poets was not unmixed with a resentment on their own account against an interference with what they regarded as their lawful occupation. However that may be, it is the complainants themselves who have rendered necessary what they call 'cruelty.' It is the professional literary critics of the day, with their 'hands-all-round' system, who have bolstered up sham poets and persuaded the public to take tinsel for true metal, and to buy up edition after edition of what, considered as poetry, was only fit for the waste-paper basket. If they (the aforesaid critics) really believed in the worth of such poetry, one cannot think much of their critical insight; if they did not, the conclusion must be still less to their advantage. In either case, it seems desirable that a little wholesome truth should be spoken on the subject.

It may be, in fact has been, urged that the feeling of the present day is against the production of long poems on historical or heroic subjects; that we look now for an intensity of feeling and expression in poetry which cannot possibly be sustained throughout a long narrative or dramatic poem; that hence may arise an impatience on the part of the modern reader with poems of the type of which 'England's Darling' is an example. But, in fact, the change is not so much in the readers as in the poets. We do not believe that the reading world—the best section of it—would be one whit less ready to hail and to appreciate 'Philip van Artevelde,' for instance, if it were first published now, than was the case at its first appearance sixty years ago. But Sir Henry Taylor's personages, in spite of a certain amount of occasional prosing, are real flesh-and-blood characters, and they are characters of the time; we seem to get a sudden glimpse into the

fierce, turbulent, cut-throat life of the Flanders of the fourteenth century. At a more recent period we have seen how 'The Ring and the Book,' in spite of inordinate lengthiness and prodigious abnormalities of literary style and form, took the reading world by storm from its sheer intensity of pathos and its electric flash-lights into the recesses of the human heart. No; it is not that we are not as willing as ever to read long poems, when they merit the name of poetry; but it certainly is the fact that at the present moment the tendency of our most genuine poets appears to be towards subjective and introspective rather than objective poetry. It is the Pharisees of the literary world who for a pretence make long poems, and think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. From whatever cause it be, those poets among us who have the strongest feeling and the most genuine power of poetic expression, seem for the present disposed to confine their utterances within the limits of concise reflective or lyrical poems, and manifest little inclination towards objective poetry in the form of extended drama or narrative. Perhaps the explanation may be found in the restless and unsettled state of opinion and conviction at present, the prevalence of the spirit of impassioned scepticism, in which criticism of life is so strangely mingled with aspiration. In such a time it is not strange that the poet too should have his 'obstinate questionings,' and that contemporary poetry should deal more largely in psychological and spiritual problems than in objective creation.

It is with this class of subjective and contemplative poetry that we must rank the most powerful productions in the thin volume of 'Poems' by Mr. Francis Thompson, who, if he have not already acquired a right to the title of a great poet, seems at least to have more of the making of one in him than any other among the younger poets of the day. From internal evidence it may be gathered that these poems are the utterances of one who, though still young, has passed through deep waters; they contain thoughts such as are not but by bitter experience wrung from the human heart, while their literary faults are those of youth: an exuberance of language and imagery, often too little restrained by considerations of finish and balance of form and proportion. It would be easy to criticise a good deal in their detail; we are conscious often of a carelessness as to absolute metrical propriety; there is a slight tendency, not very marked but still not to be overlooked, to that false mannerism in poetic style which consists in the coinage or adoption of special

adjectives as possessing some inherent power of giving poetic colouring to a passage; 'trepidant' seems to be a favourite word, for instance; 'temerarious' occurs, we are glad to say, but once; may it be blotted in the next edition! Nor has the author yet entirely shaken himself free from the weakness of unconscious imitation of the style and manner of some of his predecessors. We should gather that he is well read in the older English poets, and in some cases his familiarity with their cadences and forms stands him in good stead; the highly elaborated refrain, for instance, in the first of the 'Sister Songs,' probably owes its suggestion to Spenser; but it is a mere suggestion as to form, no imitation of his style. But in the fine poem entitled 'Her Portrait' we find passages at least which show a little too plainly that the author has been looking over the shoulder of Cowley:—

'Heaven, which not oft is prodigal of its more
To singers, in their song too great before;
By which the hierarch of large poesy is
Restrained to his one sacred benefice;
Only for her the salutary awe
Relaxes and stern canon of its law;*
To her alone concedes pluralities,
To her alone to reconcile agrees
The Muses, the Graces, and the Charities;
To her, who can the trust so well conduct,
To her it gives the use, to us the usufruct.'

The writer of that passage had certainly been reading the 'Ode to the Royal Society.' In the lovely little poem called 'Dream-Tryst,' again, the executors of Dante Gabriel Rossetti might claim a reversionary interest in the closing quatrain:—

'I joyed for me, I joyed for her,
Who with the Past meet girl about:
Where our last kiss still warms the air,
Nor can her eyes go out.'

But these echoes are but occasional lapses, in isolated passages; they do not characterise any poem as a whole, nor convict the author of any conscious and systematic attempt to play upon another's pipe. It is fair to recognise their existence, and it is as well to call their author's attention to a pitfall which perhaps few young and ardent poets have

* We give the punctuation as in the book; it is obviously faulty. There are, unfortunately, not a few poets who do not understand how to punctuate their own poems. Browning, for instance, had not apparently an idea of punctuation.

altogether eluded. But the same poem which contains the Cowleyfied passage quoted above, furnishes us with evidence sufficient of the poet's capacity to sing his own tune, and in a noble style too:—

‘How should I gauge what beauty is her dole,
Who cannot see her countenance for her soul;
As birds see not the casement for the sky?’

Then, after a few lines in which this fine idea is amplified, the poet is nevertheless drawn back to contemplate the material countenance, as the only visible index of the soul:—

‘There Regent Melancholy wide controls;
There Earth- and Heaven-Love play for aureoles;
There Sweetness out of Sadness breaks at fits,
Like bubbles on dark water, or as flits
A sudden silver fin through its deep infinites;
There amorous Thought has sucked pale Fancy's breath,
And Tenderness sits looking toward the lands of death;
There Feeling stills her breathing with her hand,
And Dream from Melancholy part wrests the wand;
And on this lady's heart, looked you so deep,
Poor Poetry has rocked himself to sleep;
Upon the heavy blossom of her lips
Hangs the bee Musing; nigh her lids eclipse
Each half-occulted star beneath that lies;
And in the contemplation of those eyes,
Passionless passion, wild tranquillities.’

The close is unfortunately marred by an oversight in grammatical construction, one of those slips in detail to which we have already referred. But as a poetic rhapsody on the intellectual symbolism of woman's beauty we know nothing to compare with it since the sixth and seventh strophes of Tennyson's ‘*Elcänore*,’ and it is perhaps superior to those in a sense, though less highly polished, from its tone of deeper sincerity. The reader has, we hope, noted the exquisite fancy in the two lines we have italicised; the metaphor is so delicate that it will hardly bear comment; the slightest touch would seem to rend it; but it is a jewel that might have come out of Shakspeare's treasury.

One poem, however, towers above all the rest in this small collection; one of which the predominant idea, of the love of the Creator overpowering and compelling the creature to itself, is to be traced in some of the religious poems of George Herbert, but is here expressed with an intensity of pathos, a wildness of imagery, to which the

gentle priest of Bemerton was an entire stranger. The extraordinary title, 'The Hopnd of Heaven,' at once compels the reader's attention, nor is he likely to be less impressed and drawn onward by the opening of the chase:—

'I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
 I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
 I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
 Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
 Up vistaed hopes I sped;
 And shot, precipitated
 Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
 From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
 But with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbed pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
 They beat--and a Voice beat
 More instant than the Feet—
 "All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."'

But he would take refuge in human love:—

'I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
 By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
 Trellised with intertwining charities;
 (For, though I knew His love who follow'd,
 Yet was I sore adread
 Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside)
 But, if one little casement parted wide,
 The gust of His approach would clash it to.
 Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.'

He would fly 'across the margent of the world,' cling to
 'the whistling mane of every wind'—in vain:—

'Still with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbed pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
 Came on the following Feet,
 And a Voice above their beat,
 "Naught shelters thee, who will not shelter me."'

Then follows in a few lines one of the most exquisite touches in the poem; the innocent love of children may be a refuge—

'I turned me to them very wistfully'—

as, indeed, how many a wearied and guilt-laden soul has done! But 'their angel' plucked them from him. Then, driven from this resource, he would be one with Nature's children, the forces of earth and air; he would know all

the secrets of her changes, and how the clouds arise, and would triumph and sadden with all weather :—

‘Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat ;
But not by that, by that, was eased my human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven’s grey cheek.’

And still the chase presses on ; life seems wasted ; he stands amid the dust of mounded years :—

‘Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
Are yielding.’

The battlements of eternity are half seen through the mists of time ; the end of the chase is near :—

‘Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit ;
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea :
“And is thy earth so marred,
Shattered in shard on shard ?
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me.”

Halts by me that footfall :
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly ?
“Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He whom thou seekest !
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me.”’

So ends a poem of seven pages, which, with its wild and perpetually shifting imagery, its power of language, and its solemn and pathetic moral, may be said to be absolutely unique in the religious poetry (if we are so to class it) of our language. The few quotations we have made give no adequate idea of the effect of the whole, for its fervour and splendour of diction are unabated from first to last. It is one of those rare instances of poems with a moral purpose, in which it is difficult to say whether we are most impressed with the moral earnestness or the poetic beauty of the work. As to the moral, we presume, from the evidence of certain poems in the book, that the author is a Roman Catholic, and no doubt there are those who will urge that this poem is merely a striking re-statement of the old Catholic dogma of asceticism and renunciation. But this is surely rather a narrow view to take of it. As a matter of fact, the poet uses no theological personification or definition whatever ; and the central idea itself, that true repose

of spirit is to be found only in resting on some ideal behind and apart from the material shows of life, is one over which Marcus Aurelius and Gordon might have shaken hands. It may be the Christ crowned with thorns—it may be the ‘Not-ourself which makes for righteousness;’ the root principle is the same: as Matthew Arnold finely says in his ‘Obermann’ poem, speaking of the small band ‘whom the world could not tame:’—

‘Christian and pagan, king and slave,
Soldier and anchorite,
Distinctions we esteem so grave,
Are nothing in their sight.
They do not ask who pined unseen,
Who was on action hurl’d,
Whose one bond is, that all have been
Unspotted by the world.’

But, whether we read into it the creed of the Christian devotee or of the reverential sceptic, the author has produced a poem which, once read, can never be forgotten.*

One of the noteworthy points in Mr. Thompson’s poetry, and one which is especially illustrated in this poem, is his powerful and truly poetic use of metaphor. As was observed in an article in these pages a few years ago on Mr. Swinburne’s *Lyrics*,† the distinction between metaphor and mere simile forms one of the most important differentiations between poetry and mere versifying. The true poetic metaphor is not a mere comparison of one idea with another; it is the interpenetration of the borrowed imagery with the expression of the central thought, as if it were the only and inevitable manner of expressing it; the metaphor becoming in itself, as it were, a poem within a poem, concentrated sometimes in a single word. Mr. Thompson is a master in this imaginative use of metaphor. We have drawn attention to one remarkable instance in ‘Her Portrait;’ but the poem we have just been noticing is a whole treasure-house of rich and picturesque imagery interwoven with the expression of the central thought. The idea of Hope, or an object of hope, as presenting some desirable and possibly attainable good at the end of a long perspective, may have presented itself to many minds, may be capable

* It is a pity that the associations with the poem should have been disturbed by the fantastic and badly drawn illustration which forms the frontispiece to the volume. We hope this will be cut out of the next edition.

† *Edinburgh Review*, April 1890.

of extended amplification ; but here it is all flashed upon us in passing, in the one magical expression—

‘Up vistaed hopes I sped.’

The line is a poem in itself.

The two poems in the volume entitled ‘Sister-Songs’ are only less remarkable in that their subject is less grave and striking, for they are equally redolent of true poetic genius. They form a kind of homage to two children, carried out in the splendid hyperbole characteristic of Elizabethan days ; the first one, as we have already noted, recalling something of the same kind of effect as is produced by the elaborate recurring refrains in such poems as Spenser’s ‘Prothalamium’ and ‘Epithalamium.’ This poem, addressed to the younger sister, is interrupted from time to time by a refrain on which slight variations are played :—

‘Then, Spring’s little children, your lauds do ye upraise
To Sylvia, O Sylvia, her sweet, feat ways !
Your lovesome labours lay away,
And trick you out in holiday,
For syllabing to Sylvia ;
And all you birds on branches, lave your mouths with May,
To bear with me this burthen,
For singing to Sylvia.’

There is a charming music in this stanza, and the reader will no doubt have noted the piquant effect of the slight trip in the metre at the last line, ‘For singing to Sylvia’—a calculated effect, as it recurs at each repetition. The idea of the poem is that of a vision of the powers of Spring doing homage to the bright child, which is carried out with much charming and delicate fancy ; but the poem takes a more pathetic turn towards the close, where the poet justifies the expenditure of all this rhapsody ‘for a child’s kiss’ by some tender words, part of which may refer to a real experience, on the blessing of a child’s kindness to the unhappy and unconsolated :

‘Almost I had forgot
The healing harms,
And whitest witchery, a-lurk in that
Authentic cestus of two girdling arms :
And I remembered not
The subtle sanctities which dart
From childish lips’ unvalued precious brush,
Nor how it makes the sudden lilies push
Between the loosening fibres of the heart.’

‘Therefore I kissed in thee
The heart of childhood, so divine for me.’

And, indeed, no *apologia* was needed.

The poem addressed to 'the elder nursling of the nest' is much more serious in tone, and pervaded with the deeper human interest which surrounds the girl who is nearer to the time when the child-nature should put on its woman's garb. The first pages of the poem are occupied with a plea, full of beauty and feeling, for pardon to the poet for venturing to hymn her praises—a plea diversified with digressions into graver thoughts on life and love, and the mystery of failure and disappointment. And yet—

'Were any gentle passion hallowed me,
Who must none other breath of passion feel
Save such as winnows to the fledg'd heel
The tremulous Paradisal plumages;
The conscious sacramental trees
Which ever be
Shaken celestially,

Consentient with enamoured wings, might know my love for thee.'

But more: the object of his song had been as the first break of dawn after a night of misery, as the beauty of the mirage seen across the arid desert—

'A sight like innocence when one has sinned!'

The mirage was a baseless vision, but this one remained—

'All these *are*, for these *are* she.

In all I work, my hand includeth thine;
Thou rushest down in every stream
Whose passion frets my spirit's deepening gorge;
Unhoods't mine eyes heart, and fliest my dream;
Thou swing'st the hammers of my forge;
As the innocent moon, that nothing does but shine,
Moves all the labouring surges of the world.'

And in contemplating this young life, 'whose sex is yet 'but in her soul,' the poet, after a very fine passage which we have not space to quote (in fact, we must put restraint on ourselves not to quote page after page), is led to an unusual and striking thought on the disproportion which may exist between the essential loftiness of the child soul and the shackles under which the mind is fettered during growth and education—word so often practically misused:—

"Whose sex is in thy soul!"
What think we of thy soul?
Which has no parts, and cannot grow,
Unfurled not from an embryo;
Born of full stature, lineal to control;
And yet a pigmy's yoke must undergo.

Yet must keep pace and tarry, patient, kind,
 With its unwilling scholar, the dull, tardy mind ; *
 Must be obsequious to the body's powers,
 Whose low hands mete its paths, set ope and close its ways ;
 Must do obeisance to the days,
 And wait the little pleasure of the hours ;
 Yea, ripe for kingship, yet must be
 Captive in statuted minority !
 So is all power fulfilled, as soul in thee.
 So still the ruler by the ruled takes rule,
 And wisdom weaves itself i' the loom o' the fool.
 'The splendent sun no splendour can display,
 Till on gross things he dash his broken ray,
 From cloud and tree and flower re-tossed in prisms spray.'

The last thought, which is carried on further in the same strain of illustration, is in accordance with scientific truth, as indeed the highest poetry is often found to be, the poet feeling his way by the shorter path of intuition to the point to which the man of science is led by observation and deduction.† As to the earlier portion of the quotation, and the position that the soul is 'born of full stature,' there, indeed, the poet will have to face a formidable array of questions. But we must avoid the quagmires of psychology, only recognising the truth of this picture of the conflict between the soul and the fettering limitations of mind, and the striking character of the reflexion founded on it. Still finer is the passage which contemplates the day when the maiden, grown a woman, shall give up the secret of her heart to another :—

'But on a day whereof I think,
 One shall dip his hand to drink
 In that still water of thy soul,
 And its imaged tremors race
 Over thy joy-troubled face.'

'One grace alone I seek.

Oh ! may this treasure-galleon of my verse,
 Fraught with its golden passion, oared with cadent rhyme,
 Set with a towering press of fantasies,

Drop safely down the time,

Leaving mine isled self behind it far

* 'The soul must needs instruct her weak compeer.' 'Sordello.'

† See a noteworthy example of this in Cowley's 'Hymn to Light,' where somewhat the same idea as that of Mr. Thompson, of light taking colour and beauty from the objects it breaks upon—

'A crimson garment in the rose thou wearest,' &c.

is carried out at much greater length, in a strain quite in advance of the scientific thought of Cowley's own day.

Soon to be sunken in the abyss of seas
 (As down the years the splendour voyages
 From some long ruined and night-submerged star),
 And in thy subject sovereign's havening heart
 Anchor the freightage of its virgin ore;
 Adding its wasteful more
 To his overflowing treasury.
 So through his river mine shall reach thy sea,
 Bearing its confluent part;
 In his pulse mine shall thrill;
 And the quick heart shall quicken from the heart that's still.'

Surely never had girl such a poetic homage as this (if it be actually a personal poem—a question of no direct concern to the reader) from a poet who compares himself, at the close, merely to a child who, when others bring their gifts, will also bring 'some fond and fancied nothings,' and say, 'I give you these.' The poem requires careful reading (as, indeed, does all poetry that is worth the name) to follow out the argument, which is perfectly connected throughout, though sometimes a little difficult to disentangle from the wealth of imagery with which it is presented; but it is worth the trouble. Reading it again and again, with the object of this brief analysis, we have read it with ever-increasing surprise at the splendour of the thoughts it contains, and of the language in which they are enshrined.

We commenced our comments on Mr. Thompson's poems with the remark that he had the making in him of a great poet. We must conclude with unsaying our words. He is already a great poet, if the phrase means anything, and if quality is to be the test rather than quantity: greater, perhaps, than he is aware of. As he himself says:—

'We speak a lesson taught we know not how,
 And what it is that from us flows
 The hearer better than the utterer knows.'

In the purely literary sense there are, as we have already implied, faults to be recognised, but they are such as he may easily shake himself free from, if the dawn, as we may hope, of happier days should stimulate him to renewed efforts of his remarkable genius.

In the literary sense, on the other hand, Mr. William Watson still merits the praise of being a wellnigh faultless poet. His two small volumes (we pass over for the moment 'The Purple East') display more prominently than ever the qualities which have always characterised his poetry—strong and concentrated thought expressed in dignified and per-

fectly finished verse, the quality of which reminds one of Coleridge's distinction between prose and poetry; the former consisting of 'words in the best order,' the latter of 'the best words in the best order.' One cannot light upon a loosely composed line or an ill-chosen expression anywhere. One may regret sometimes that he says too little, but he can at least boast the rare excellence of never saying a word too much. A great imaginative poet he is not, or has not so far shown himself to be. His poetry is emphatically 'a criticism of life,' even avowedly so. His poetic faith may be summarised by the collocation of two verses from the 'Odes' volume. One is from the poem addressed 'to Arthur Christopher Benson,' contrasting the old associations that cling around Eton with the claims of modern life:—

' This neighbouring joy and woe—
This present sky and sea—
These men and things we know,
Whose touch we would not flee—
To us, O friend, shall long
Yield aliment of song;
Life as I see it lived is great enough for me.'

The reverse of the thought is presented in the little epigram, as one may call it, addressed to a poet whose name is not given:—

' Forget not, brother singer ! that though Prose
Can never be too truthful or too wise,
Song is not Truth, not Wisdom, but the rose
Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes.'

Mr. Watson may be said to have fairly preserved the balance between these two sides of his ideal. Even when he lets fly a merely political shaft in the shape of a critical sonnet, there is always something in the form of expression which is of interest for its own sake; the flight of the critical arrow is steadied and directed by winged words of poetic metaphor. The most remarkable poem in the two volumes is the poet's nobly felt and expressed 'Apologia,' a reply to some current criticism of his writings, of which, perhaps, the only one which had any basis was that he had occupied himself too much in writing poems about other poets. His answer is that these are a part of life:—

' Holding these also to be very part
Of Nature's greatness, and accounting not
Their descants least heroical of deeds: '

and assuredly no apology is needed for so noble a poetic

reflexion as that on 'The Tomb of Burns.' To the charge that he had brought nothing new 'into an old and iterative ' world ' he answers:—

' Is the Muse
Fall'n to a thing of Mode, that must each year
Supplant her derelict self of yester-year?
Or do the mighty voices of old days
At last so tedious grow, that one whose lips
Inherit some far echo of their tones—
How far, how faint, none better knows than he
Who hath been nourished on their utterance—can
But irk the ears of such as care no more
The accent of dead greatness to recall? '

The tone taken by the author in this and the succeeding passages, as to his claim to be considered to some extent an inheritor from some of the greater poets of old, is expressed with what may be called a dignified humility, which has the still better quality of giving the impression of entire and unaffected sincerity. As to the abstract question, it is certain that the mere revival of the form and manner of an older poet is an achievement of no permanent value, though it may arouse a passing interest; but we do not consider that Mr. Watson comes under this condemnation at all; in fact, he has hardly done justice to his own position, and has missed a point in his reply which we may make for him. To be a mere imitator of a preceding poet is one thing; to be a disciple and follower of his school of thought and style is another thing. Mr. Watson may be said to be a follower of the school of Wordsworth, not so much that he writes as Wordsworth did write, but that he writes (within certain limits) as Wordsworth might have written had he been confronted with the circumstance and tone of thought of the present day. The literary use of language in the expression of poetic thought is an art to be developed and perfected by the study of great models, just as a musical composer of one generation studies the style of his most gifted predecessors to acquire greater power in the handling of his materials. Mr. Watson has no doubt been largely influenced both by Wordsworth and Arnold, but he is assuredly no mere imitator; his ideas and his language are distinctly his own. His 'Apologia' proceeds from this subject to deal, in a higher strain, with his favourite position that life has interest wide enough for the poet, and far wider than is recognised in much of contemporary poetry;

that all art is not necessarily cold that breathes 'an ardour
'not of Eros' lips: '—

——'that in man's life
Is room for great emotions unbegot
Of dalliance and embracement, unbegot
Ev'n of the purer nuptials of the soul: '

and on this line of thought the poem is conducted to a noble climax, which has already been often quoted, and is perhaps the finest passage Mr. Watson has written.

Among the longer poems in these volumes—longer by comparison, for all are brief—there are one or two which are especially striking from the manner in which, at the close of what seems at first a merely objective poem, the author turns round upon us with an unexpected subjective application. In the poem entitled 'The Father of the Forest,' we seem at first to have only the kind of musing that one is often tempted into over the history and associations hanging about an ancient tree, the monarch of the forest—the things it has witnessed, the great human drama that has been enacted while it silently flourished and decayed. But the tables are turned in an almost startling manner; the yew-tree asserts its superiority as a part of the great calm life of nature: —

'Who prates to me of arms and kings,
Here in these courts of old repose?

Often an air comes idling by
With news of cities and of men:
I hear a multitudinous sigh,
And lapse into my soul again;
Shall her great noons and sunsets be
Blurred with thine infelicity?'

Another example, lighter in tone but more individual in its idea, is that entitled 'A Study in Contrasts,' the contrast being between a bustling collie dog, whose fussiness and volatility are admirably described, and the serene calm of the Persian cat who watches him from the window:—

'And as her eyes with indolent regard
Viewed his upbubbings of ebullient life,
She seemed the Orient Spirit incarnate, lost
In contemplation of the Western Soul!
Even so, methought, the genius of the East,
Reposeful, patient, undemonstrative,
Luxurious, enigmatically sage,
Dispassionately cruel, might look down
On all the fever of the Occident;—

The brooding mother of the unfilial world,
 Recumbent on her own antiquity,
 Aloof from our mutations and unrest,
 Alien to our achievements and desires,
 Too proud alike for protest or assent
 When new thoughts thunder at her massy door ;—
 Another brain dreaming another dream,
 Another heart recalling other loves,
 Too grey and grave for our adventurous hopes,
 For our precipitate pleasures too august,
 And in majestic taciturnity
 Refraining her illimitable scorn.'

The climax of the last line is admirable, and the whole idea, as a piece of half serious, half sportive irony, is very completely worked out.

Whether the author was well advised in publishing his booklet of sonnets on 'The Purple East' may be a question. Certainly we hold that poets may well make their voice heard on subjects of public import; certainly also we detest that kind of selfish national policy which was gibbeted by Rossetti in a finer sonnet than any of these (that 'On Refusal of Aid between Nations'); and we are fully in sympathy with the chivalrous spirit that runs through these effusions, which in a literary sense are not in the author's best vein—he was, perhaps, thinking too much of his meaning to pay his usual attention to its form of expression. But has Mr. Watson really reflected on what it is that he wants England to do, and what would be the probable result of the kind of armed interference which he passionately calls for? Does he seriously suppose that a war of vengeance on Turkey would be a means of lessening human suffering and bloodshed? Unless a man is quite clear in his own mind as to the cause and effect of a war, he is hardly wise in attempting to hound his countrymen on, from whatever chivalrous or well-intended motives, into actions which may only be the beginning of more extended evil than that which he seeks to put down.*

We come now to what we may call the debateable ground. So far we have had little doubt at least as to the general tenor of our critique; we are sure of two real poets and one Poet Laureate. It becomes more difficult to take a

* 'The tender mercies of the weak,
 As of the wicked, are but cruel.'

Philip van Artevelde.

decided line as to the rest of the contents of the landing-net. They may be divided into two classes. On the one hand, we have scholarly and well-written poetry, not without fancy, and indubitably pleasant to read, yet of which we may question whether it possesses any thought which can render it of serious interest to the world, or any power of permanent vitality. On the other hand come the poems which contain considerable originality of idea, which deal sometimes in a striking and earnest spirit with some serious problem of life, but which do not justify sufficiently their existence in the form of poetry. It is with the latter class, on the whole, that we feel the least sympathy; at all events, from the critical standpoint. However striking may be the subject matter in itself, whether it take the form of narration or of subjective reflection, unless there is anything in the form of its setting in verse which manifestly adds to its power and effectiveness, it has shown no right to the ceremonial of versification at all, and had better have been plainly set down in prose. But the poetry which has the charm of musical verse and finished literary workmanship, giving expression to ideas which, though they may not be far-reaching or strikingly original, have sufficient interest to stimulate our own thought and set the wheels of fancy going, has its value and claims recognition, as a contribution to the enjoyment of life. We do not suppose that Mr. Benson's poems will be read by future generations, but they form a very pleasant volume to turn over in an hour of idleness; the literary style and workmanship are always satisfying; there is a good deal of sympathetic observation of nature in landscape, and bird, and flower, around which the author's fancy 'plays with similes' as well as with description, always gracefully, sometimes tenderly; while there are not wanting some poems here and there that touch a deeper chord, among which we may especially mention 'Linquenda,' 'The Moment,' 'Attributes,' 'The Prison Wall,' 'A Death-bed,' 'Afterwards.' One or two poems in connexion with school life are good examples of a class of poem which always has an interest for those who have once been English schoolboys; one of them, 'After Construing,' contains a striking reflexion on the contrast between the two most prominent Latin authors 'edited for the use of schools'—the tender-hearted Virgil and the imperturbable and inscrutable Cæsar—which is likely to fix itself in the reader's memory. One of the strongest things in the book is the poem entitled

'My Poet,' the second part of which asks what we have often thought was a question to be asked; we will leave the reader to find it for himself, not wishing specially to quote what, though certainly effective, may be said to be the only thing in the volume that has a sting in it. The same objection does not apply to 'The Prison Wall,' which is a good example of the more concentrated and thoughtful of the shorter poems in the collection:—

'The future is mine own, mine own;
I muse and make it what I will;—
A monarch on an airy throne,
A daisy on a silent hill.

With doubting heart and breaking tear
The present I excuse, deny:
There is one space undimmed and clear
That may portend a sunnier sky.

But ah! the past; her back was turned.
I spoke and praised her; when she heard,
Her eye in silent anger burned,
And dumbly fell the unuttered word.'

The final stanza is certainly powerful; the others are not free from defects; the fourth line of the first stanza is incongruous with the preceding image, and adds nothing to the developement of the idea; but it is a little poem with a thought at the back of it.

The posthumous volume of poems by Lord de Tabley contains work of much the same kind as that which constituted the bulk of his former volume,* but nothing equal to the two or three short poems which gave its real value to that volume. The principal poems, like those in the former volume, are long ones on subjects of classic fable—'Orpheus in Hades,' 'Circe,' and 'The Death of Phaëthon.' Their failure to interest is not to be attributed in any way to the rebellion of the modern mind against classical themes; so far as that rebellion exists, it is only as it has been justified by the number of dull and shallow poets who have taken refuge in classicalities under the idea that a lofty subject would make a lofty poem, and have thus created a kind of prejudice against pagan deities or pagan machinery

* The volume of 1893, we observe, has been re-issued without any kind of alteration or new matter, but with the mere substitution of the date '1896' for '1893' on the title-page—a piece of bookseller's jugglery which should be protested against.

in poetry. In spite of that, no one finds 'Laodamia' or the 'Harp-player on Ætna' dull. And Lord de Tabley's classic poems are inviting to the sight; they create a first impression of *richesse* and picturesqueness which is illusory; and it is curious to consider why. Any one turning over rapidly the pages of either Mr. Thompson's or Lord de Tabley's poems to get that first idea of what kind of picture they make on the pages, which we often like to get before fairly attacking a poem, might gain very much the same first impression from each—that of pages shot with colour from a profusion of glowing and glittering epithets. But on reading the two, he would find that while Mr. Thompson's adjectives are only the picturesque clothing of his varied imagery, Lord de Tabley's are epithets and nothing more; they are entirely superficial decoration; they do not clothe thought, they are there to conceal the absence of it. Poetry is not to be concocted by the lavish use of epithet, by strewing the page with 'sapphire bars,' 'silver moon,' 'ebon cloud,' 'orange sea-wrack,' 'falcon wing,' 'moaning blast,' &c. &c. There are no doubt what are called 'fine lines' from time to time in these classical poems; they are dignified in outward manner, but they are entirely superficial. The most real poem in the book is the last one, 'The Haughty Lady condemns Love and despises Passion,' an expression of what has possibly more often been felt by 'haughty ladies' than the world is aware of; viz.: that love and its natural sequel, 'poor pipe of earthly passion,' is a thing beneath her and not to be entertained without derogation of her dignity and self-applause; her revolt is expressed throughout both with dignity and energy. It is a pity that Lord de Tabley either deceived himself or was deceived by his friends into a belief in the superior importance of his classical subjects, whereas in fact he had a vein of true feeling in what may be called the poetry of modern humanity; and if he would have dropped his decorative classicalities and produced more such poems as 'Nuptial Song' and 'Rural Evening,' he might have gone down to posterity as a poet worthy to be had in remembrance.

The poems of Mr. Davidson belong to the opposite school; that in which the poet's main object is either to enforce a moral or to tell a tragic tale, the literary form being in either case obviously regarded as a matter of secondary importance so long as the moral or the incident is clearly and emphatically set forth. This attitude is the popular one in the present day, when the moral aspect of art is so much emphasised;

and we even find Mr. Davidson spoken of as our leading and most promising poet. It may be questioned whether he has shown, so far, much claim to be considered as a poet at all, in the full and complete sense of the word. He has produced some striking narratives and parables in verse, but in almost all cases it is the thing which is told rather than the manner of telling it which holds the attention of the reader. The inventive and thoughtful faculty is strong in him; the shaping faculty is weak; and poetry is not complete without the union and interpenetration of both faculties. The most remarkable as well as the largest poem in the 'Ballads and 'Songs' volume is that entitled 'A Ballad in Blank Verse 'of the Making of a Poet.' It is a study of a phenomenon which may be said to be characteristic of the present generation—the rebellion of the natural or pagan mind against the restrictions of the religious creed. An ardent and imaginative youth, his fancy full of dreams of 'the fair humanities' of pagan mythology, is the son of a stern couple of Puritans of the old stock, whose hearts are wellnigh broken at the contemplation of his apparently callous indifference to all which they hold not only as most sacred, but as necessary to eternal salvation. While they would ask —

“ If on the instant death should summon you,
What doom would the eternal Judge pronounce ? ”

A vision rose before him; and the sound
Husky and plaintive of his father's voice,
Seemed unintelligible and afar.
He saw Apollo on the Dardan beach;
The waves lay still; the winds hung motionless,
And held their breath to hear the rebel god,
Conquered and doomed, with stormy sobbing song,
And crashing discords of his golden lyre,
Reluctantly compel the walls of Troy,
Unquarried and unhewn, in supple lines
And massive strength to rise about the town.

Worse still, he had visions of the Cyprian Aphrodite, 'all
'one blush and glance of passion,' and failing her—

' He sought the outcast Aphrodite, dull,
Tawdry, unbeautiful, but still divine,
Even in the dark streets of a noisome port '—

perhaps a not improbable anticlimax under the circumstances. After his mother has died of grief over his defections, in pure pity to his father he professes penitence and

receives the sacrament, only to rush away and walk at evening by the purple firth and see 'brown locks upon the 'brine,' to rebel yet further against the creed of his fathers in propounding the view that man is the only godlike thing in the universe, thus sinning 'the unpardonable sin' in the eyes of his stern father, who in his passionate affection would be willing to be eternally lost with his beloved son rather than separate from him for eternity, but that he was elect unto salvation. The father dies, and the poet is free to recover from his remorse and indulge his ideal:—

'No creed for me! I am a man apart:

I am a man set by to overhear
The inner harmony, the very tune
Of Nature's heart; to be a thoroughfare
For all the pageantry of Time;
 winter shall ply
His ancient craft, soldering the years with ice;
And spring appear caught in a leafless brake,
Breathless with wonder and the tears half dried
Upon her human cheek; summer shall come
And waste his passion like a prodigal
Right royally; and autumn spend her gold
Free-handled like a harlot; men to know,
Women to love are waiting everywhere.'

Here we may 'put Schraumm's pipe in his mouth again;' his philosophy is not, after all, very new; but the antagonism between the religious and the pagan view of life is certainly put with considerable power and pathos. A similar idea is at the root of the most striking of the shorter poems, 'The Ballad of a Nun,' who broke away from the convent in the unquenchable desire to taste of natural human love and become 'sister to the mountains' and to the sun and moon, and after all was permitted to die in the odour of sanctity. But here again the interest is more in the idea than in the treatment of it, and this is more emphatically the case with 'Thirty Bob a Week,' which might have been a fine and pathetic poem were it not defiled (in a literary sense) by the futile realism involved in the use of slang. Dialect is one thing, slang is another. Slang is death to poetry; even a writer of such natural poetic gifts as Mr. Kipling has cut his own throat with it. The finest page in the book, in point of poetic style, is that in which, in a poem entitled 'After the End,' a question is asked which must have occurred to many an ardent mind in con-

templating that distant but inevitable end of planetary life with which modern science threatens us:—

‘ After the end of all things,
 After the years are spent,
 After the loom is broken,
 After the robe is rent,
 Will there be hearts a-beating,
 Will friend converse with friend,
 Will men and women be lovers
 After the end?
 Roses and dew, the stars and the grass,
 Kingdoms and homes like fashions must pass,
 Seedtime and harvest, sunshine and rain
 Cease and be welcomed never again;
 But passion and power, courage and truth,
 Grace and delight and beauty and youth,
 Will they go out like the lights at a ball,
 With sun, moon, and stars at the end of all?’

Such a passage illustrates one mission of a poet—one which the late Poet Laureate so largely fulfilled for his own generation—that of giving poetic voice to the prevalent thoughts and longings of his contemporaries; and in this poem it is done in language which is effective from its very simplicity and sincerity as well as from its musical versification. The ‘Fleet Street Eclogues,’ which are imaginary conversations between newspaper men in the intervals of routine work at the office, contain some pleasant fancy and some real feeling, and are worth turning over; but they have little literary value, and many of the conversations tossed to and fro in verse might as well have been written in prose. But there is room to expect more and better things from Mr. Davidson when he has realised that the form in poetry is as important as the thought.

Mr. F. R. Statham’s volume of poems is disappointing, inasmuch as while the first poem in the book is a fine one, both in passionate feeling and in stately verse, there is nothing in the further contents of the volume at all on the same level. They are well written in a literary sense, but they give the impression of having been written as stray poems on various occasions, rather with the object of giving utterance to a reflexion in verse than with any serious aim at the production of poetry, and then collected to form a volume. There are many volumes of poetry thus produced, no doubt; but there is evidence, at all events in the first poem, that the author could do more than this, and poets

who mean business should go to work in a more serious spirit. The first poem, 'Gianetta,' is strung upon a slender thread of narrative, hinted at rather than told. The heroine, the daughter of an old Italian painter, has given all she had to give of love to a patrician friend and patron of her father, who had been unaware of her parentage at the time, and on discovering it is indignant with her for having tempted or allowed him unwittingly to dishonour the child of his friend, while she appeals to him to undo the wrong by marriage, receiving merely a haughty refusal accompanied by a request for another meeting. She keeps the appointment only to slay her lover and, in a revulsion of remorse, to turn the weapon against herself. She arms herself with an antique poniard from her father's stores—

'A ruby crowned the hilt, a drop of blood,
That seemed to make suggestion to the blade;
It fixed her glance a moment while she stood
Testing the point, and for that instant made
Such strange confusion of her fixed intent
That at her feet she dropped hate's instrument.'

The harsh diction of the last line is no doubt intentional. There is a pathetic picture of her last sight of her father slumbering before the unfinished painting in which she recognises her own fair form, which shall not live to mock her memory should she never return :—

'Still noiselessly within the door she stepped,
And from her breast the fateful weapon drew;
From top to base the murderous sentence crept.'

The meeting of the pair, the progress through the dark city, 'guilt and vengeance side by side,' leads up to the double tragedy :—

'the daylight's early glow
Looked through the panes and might have deemed they slept
Save for the purple rivulet that crept

That slowly crept from her invaded side
Around the base of love's deserted hills,
To feed a lake whose slow-congealing tide
Seemed like the fence of their divided wills:
Of hers, whose love became a wasting fire,
Of his, whose death revived her slain desire.'

We have not quoted the most powerful passages ; but the effect of the poem lies in its sustained style as a whole

(in spite of an occasional faulty line), and the unrelenting manner in which the passion marches from stanza to stanza. Among the minor poems in the volume the most individual are 'The Beacon,' a pretty and touching sea idyll, 'Maxwell Square,' and a short figurative poem entitled 'The Dagger.' 'A Dip into Keats' is a fine sonnet.

The collection and publication of the posthumous poems of Christina Rossetti will neither add to nor injure her fame as a poet, though it serves to strengthen the feeling of almost reverent affection with which she must be regarded even by those who know her only through her published works. There is nothing in the 'New Poems' equal to the best of what she had already given us, and some of them were certainly not worth preservation except for personal reasons; but the volume as a whole is one that we are glad to have. To turn it over is to stray through a kind of *hortus inclusus* of sweet and tender musings, embodied in verse which is always flowing and spontaneous, as if it were the natural medium of expression of the writer's thoughts. There are one or two poems which display a power above the general level of the book, of which the most noteworthy is 'Look on 'this picture and on this,' the remorse of a man who has been rapt away from allegiance to his first love by a stronger but less worthy attraction, but still recognises the superior purity of the soul he has deserted. What shall be the last end of it all?—

'The tearless tender eyes are closed, the tender lips are dumb—
I shall not see or hear them more until that day shall come:
Then they must speak; what will they say?—what then will be
the sum?

Shall we stand upon the left, and she upon the right—
We smirched with endless death and shame, she glorified in white—
Will she sound our accusation in intolerable light?'

Mr. Bridges in all his writings is essentially an artist, but we do not quite see what he is aiming at in his dramatic poem, 'The Humours of the Court,' professedly based on two dramas by Lope and Calderon. It is a tale of innocent intrigue in some Court of which neither date nor place is indicated, save for the reference to Milan as a neighbouring city, and in which the characters are rather stage puppets than real men and women. As an acting play, with some little alteration and condensation, it might succeed, since the actors might be able to fill out into

the semblance of flesh-and-blood humanity the figures which seem so little real on the page. As a poem for reading it is not interesting, though polished in style and lit up occasionally by a very subdued and quiescent humour, occasionally by a touch of genuine feeling which comes as a kind of surprise amid the artificial character of the whole, as if it belonged to another world than that in which the personages perform their evolutions. The short poems added to the volume include an 'Ode for Founder's Day at Eton College,' which, in its sincere, sympathetic, and manly tone, is worthy of the author of the sonnet on Anglo-Indian visitors at Florence.*

It is a satisfaction to reflect that in the course of our short review of recent poetry we have had the happiness of being able to welcome the appearance of one new poet of the highest order of genius. It is not every day that one can chronicle such an event.

* See 'The Growth of Love.'

ART. XI.—*Democracy and Liberty.* By WILLIAM EDWARD HARTPOLE LECKY. London, New York, and Bombay: 1896.

THERE are few men better qualified than Mr. Lecky to describe the course of the great democratic movement which, during the space of a single lifetime, has been sweeping with ever-increasing force through the civilised and progressive nations of the world. The historian of the England of the Eighteenth Century has turned his eyes from the past to the present, and has produced a great work which, though it will be studied with different feelings by different readers—with sympathy or disapproval, according to the individual bias or temperament of each—will undoubtedly take a permanent place with the best political literature of our time.

Whither does this great movement tend? How does the adoption of the democratic spirit in ever greater and greater degree into the political institutions of our own and other countries answer in actual practice? Does it produce pure, wise, and steady administration of public affairs? Will democracy in its ultimate developments be found incompatible with individual liberty? What is the best way of protecting ourselves against the dangers to which a democratic system seems to be especially exposed?

Those who have read the works of Tocqueville and John Stuart Mill, of Bagehot, of Sir Henry Maine, and of Mr. Bryce, are familiar with the hopes and the fears that have influenced the most thoughtful minds on these great questions of our time. As years pass on our experience widens and ripens. Mr. Lecky examines the most salient features of democracy in the United States and in France, as well as in England, by the light of events which are still passing before our eyes. He has painted with a vigorous hand a picture of democracy up to date. To our thinking his colours are too dark. To us, the political horizon, though not free from clouds, seems far less gloomy than it does to him. His book is, however, intended as a warning, and he does well to point out the undoubted evils and the undeniable drawbacks that have accompanied the democratic movement, in a much greater measure, it must be said, in other countries than in our own. Against these he invites his countrymen to take in time due precaution.

In his preface Mr. Lecky tells us that he has never been

engaged, till he became member for Dublin University only two months ago, in active political life. His position has been the more independent standpoint of a thoughtful observer of contemporary politics, from the turmoil of which he has held himself aloof. Yet throughout his book Mr. Lecky endeavours to write in the character of a practical statesman rather than in that of the political theorist. 'How 'does it work?' is the question he is always asking as to each institution. He makes no attempt to build upon abstract or preconceived political principles. If the doctrines of absolute political equality, of the rule of mere numbers, of the 'Rights of Man,' produce, when carried into practice, satisfactory results, by all means let us accept them. If, on the other hand, the 'hereditary principle,' for instance in the constitution of a second chamber, serves a useful purpose, we should be foolish to discard it out of regard to mere abstract theory. It is needless to say that Mr. Lecky has always present to his mind a very high ideal of statesmanship, and that the manœuvres and tricks of politicians contending for power, and apparently thinking only of how they shall win votes, draw from him very vigorous expressions of righteous indignation, sometimes not unmixed with contempt. His style is always admirably clear and forcible, and his book affords a useful reminder to English writers that their language is never so delightful and never so telling as when it is simple and free from all affectation and obscurity. Let us turn, however, from the form to the substance of his teaching.

Mr. Lecky takes a very wide range. He does not concern himself solely with the working of political institutions, though it is his treatment of this part of his subject with which we propose here chiefly to deal. Democracy is considered in relation to religion and religious liberty. The growth of English toleration, the spread of priestly influence in Ireland, British rule and the native religions of India, the suppression of Mormonism by the United States, are all discussed. A very interesting chapter points out the unhistorical and unscriptural basis upon which the puritanical theory of Sunday observance has been reared. Marriage as a secular or as a religious institution, the conflict between secularism and religion in France and Germany over education, and the minor difficulties which beset national education at home, laws against drunkenness and gambling, are all treated; and very careful attention is given to socialistic projects, Henry George and Bellamy, the national workshops

of Louis Blanc, municipal industrial undertakings, unearned increments, eight-hour bills, and other plans, wise and foolish, for ameliorating the condition of the people, which have found more or less popular favour at different periods either at home or abroad. It is, however, with Democracy as the steam power which drives existing political machinery, especially in England, that we propose here to concern ourselves; and we are therefore compelled to leave much interesting matter contained in these volumes entirely undiscussed.

Even the philosophic historian yields to the ordinary human weakness of dreaming of a departed 'golden age.' Mr. Lecky, however, differs from the poets in placing this happy period at a very recent date. 'It does not appear to me that the world has ever seen a better constitution than England enjoyed between the Reform Bill of 1832 and the Reform Bill of 1867.*' This sentence at once marks off Mr. Lecky from that numerous body of modern writers who discover in the Great Reform Bill the first fatal symptoms of that special disease of the present century—democratic decline! It is time to protest against the travesty of modern history with which the reading public is becoming too well acquainted. In a recent work,† in some respects of no little merit, readers are invited to see in the statesmanship of leading reformers like Lord Grey and Lord John Russell sheer blindness as to the road along which they were beckoning the British people. Had they only known what was coming, and acted in accordance with this knowledge, they would have been foremost in their opposition to reform! For true wisdom of statesmanship we are more than once requested to listen to the utterances of the Duke of Wellington, whose transcendent services to his country can indeed never be forgotten, and whose integrity and patriotism are beyond all praise, but whose insight into the politics of his day, and whose appreciation of the forces at work in the constitution, may be judged by the prophecy that the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832 would be the immediate destruction of the Constitution, 'that the race of English gentlemen' would not long survive it, and that it would soon become impossible to govern England except through the army!

* Vol. i. p. 18.

† 'Development of Parliament during the Nineteenth Century,' by G. Lowes Dickinson.

According to these writers, that portion of the aristocracy that lent itself to reform was guilty of a blind abdication of an authority eminently beneficial to the people, and was unconsciously aiding and abetting a revolution which could end only in national disaster. This, we repeat, is to present the public with the merest travesty of history. That the great changes in our political system rendered necessary by our changed circumstances have come about peacefully and without rupture with the past, that 'revolution' in the ordinary sense of the term has been avoided, and that from 1832 to 1896 the country has enjoyed stable and, on the whole, just and wise government, are results which are due to the progressive widening of the basis upon which our constitution rests, and to the fact that our statesmen have, on the whole, kept abreast of the movement of our time. Mr. Fox, as Mr. Dickinson opportunely reminds us, asserted that the greatest innovation that could be introduced into the English Constitution would be to declare that there should be no innovation in it; it was its chief excellence that, when time and circumstances required it, it admitted of perpetual reform. This language is as true to-day as it was in Fox's time. The country has never yet known a constitution which it would not have been madness to stereotype; and Mr. Lecky's praise of the system prevailing in his younger days would be misunderstood if it were taken to mean more than that whilst it existed it was admirably fitted to the conditions and circumstances that then prevailed.

That the system existing in England previously to 1832 answered as well and lasted as long as it did was due to its having reflected for a long period, though very roughly, it is true, the actual facts and conditions of English life. The peers wielding, in fact, great influence, taking a leading part in local movements, exercising by general consent a kind of superintendence and precedence amongst their neighbours, were naturally, and in accordance with the principle of representative government, accorded a very large share of influence in the Legislature. The very absence of uniformity and symmetry in the electoral system, it was argued, served to give in the House of Commons a true representation of national sentiment. That nearly half the seats in the House of Commons should be filled by members who had purchased them for hard cash, or had been appointed to them by aristocratic patrons, was a system which introduced young men of ability into public life, enabled a

large number of members to act upon their independent judgement, and in many cases afforded useful stability to a ministry bent on forwarding a policy of which the rewards could only be sought in a distant future. These arguments only need to be recalled in order to mark the entire change in the political atmosphere that now surrounds us.

‘The old system of representation,’ writes Mr. Lecky, ‘was supported and consolidated by a tone of political feeling which has so completely passed away that it is somewhat difficult to realise the power which it once possessed—I mean that strong indisposition to organic change, as distinguished from administrative reform, which the best statesmen of all parties continually inculcated. They were usually ready to meet practical evils as they arose, but they continually deprecated any attempt to tamper with the legislative machine itself, except under the most imperious necessity. They believed that the system of the Constitution had grown up insensibly in accordance with the wants of the nation; that it was a highly complex and delicate machine, fulfilling many different purposes, and acting in many obscure and far-reaching ways, and that a disposition to pull it to pieces in the interests of some theory or speculation would inevitably lead to the destruction of parliamentary government. A great part of its virtue lay in the traditional reverence that surrounded it, in the unwritten rules and restrictions that regulated its action. There was no definite written constitution that could be appealed to; but in no other form of government did tacit understandings, traditional observances, illogical but serviceable compromises, bear so great a part.’

The statesmen who founded the American Constitution were imbued very deeply with English ideas. Sir Henry Maine has shown us how very close is the resemblance between the Constitution of the United States and the English system at the end of the eighteenth century.* American statesmen, however, chiefly showed their English spirit in building with a practical object always in view, rather than in rearing a symmetrical edifice in accordance with sweeping general principles.

‘To divide and restrict power; to secure property; to check the appetite for organic change; to guard individual liberty against the tyranny of the multitude, as well as against the tyranny of an individual or a class; to infuse into American political life a spirit of continuity and of sober and moderate freedom, were the ends which the great American statesmen set before them, and which they in a large measure attained.’ (p. 8)

It is true that the authors of the American Declaration of Independence had taken their stand upon ‘natural

* ‘Popular Government,’ by Sir Henry Maine.

‘rights.’ They there asserted that all men are created equal, and that amongst the inalienable rights with which the Creator had endowed them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—assertions found compatible for ninety years with the existence in the United States of a system of the most complete slavery the world has ever seen. As a general rule, however, English statesmen on either side of the Atlantic have shown a desire to deal with the practical difficulties of government, rather than to follow out to logical conclusions some grand political principle.

In France we find ourselves in another atmosphere. The minds of men had at the end of the eighteenth century become imbued with the teaching of Rousseau. Freedom must of necessity rest on absolute political equality. Each citizen must have one vote, and each vote must have the same value: The whole system rested on the idea of natural and inalienable rights. The terrible year 1793 witnessed the completion of the Constitution on principles of democratic equality. The Convention decreed that ‘the sovereign people is the universality of French citizens,’ and the Constitution was ratified by direct universal suffrage. This theory, that each change in the Constitution should be ratified by direct popular vote, showed great vitality, and Mr. Lecky does well to point out that ‘successive governments soon learnt how easily a plebiscite vote could be secured and directed by a strong executive, and how useful it might become to screen or to justify usurpation.’ No fine phrases about the ‘sovereign people’ can disguise the fact that the plebiscite has proved the readiest and most formidable instrument in the hands of tyrants for the striking down of popular liberty. Constitutional government and the parliamentary system prevailed in France during the bourgeois ascendancy, which lasted from 1830 to 1848, and, ‘by a happy coincidence, the king in mind and character was in perfect harmony with the representatives of the people. Constitutional government was carried out during these years faithfully, and in some respects even brilliantly; but it was tainted by much corruption, and it rested on an electorate of much less than a quarter of a million.’

Mr. Lecky looks with much favour upon those parliamentary institutions which give predominant power to the middle classes, and, as has been already said, he considers that our own system reached its highest developement during the years 1832–1867, before the submerging of the tenn-pounder in the deluge of a household franchise electorate.

'The constituencies at that time coincided very substantially with the area of public opinion. Every one who will look facts honestly in the face can convince himself that the public opinion of a nation is something very different from the votes that can be extracted from all the individuals who compose it. There are multitudes in every nation who contribute nothing to its public opinion; who never give a serious thought to public affairs, who have no spontaneous wish to take any part in them; who, if they are induced to do so, will act under the complete direction of individuals or organisations of another class. The landlord, the clergyman, or dissenting minister or priest, the local agitator, or the public-house keeper, will direct their votes, and in a pure democracy the art of winning and accumulating these votes will become one of the chief parts of practical politics.'

There is much truth in these observations; yet assuredly we should make a great mistake to leave many other considerations out of sight, and to accept in its entirety the melancholy conclusion at which Mr. Lecky arrives---viz. 'that the evil of evils in our present politics is that the constituencies can no longer be trusted, and their power is so nearly absolute that they have almost a complete control over the well-being of the empire.' Have we really arrived at such a pass that triumphant and multitudinous ignorance outweighs in the government of the country the education, the capacity, and the wisdom that belong to the few? If so, we are of Mr. Lecky's opinion, that our condition is bad indeed. In vigorous language, with every word of which we agree, he asks upon what principle of representation statesmen would deny to 4,000 graduates of an Irish university the privileges enjoyed in some western district or decaying county town, where the 'illiterates' are driven like sheep to the polling booth by agitators or priests.*

'Surely it would be impossible to exaggerate the fatuity of these attacks upon university representation; and the men who make them have rarely the excuse of honest ignorance. With many the true motive is simply a desire to extinguish constituencies which return members opposed to their politics, and at the same time, by depreciating the great centres of intelligence, to flatter the more ignorant voters. It is a truth which should never be forgotten, that in the field of politics the spirit of servility and sycophancy no longer shows itself in the adulation of kings and nobles. Faithful to its old instinct of grovelling at the feet of power, it now carries its homage to another shrine. The men who in former ages would have sought

* Mr. Lecky states in his preface that the passages treating of Irish University representation were written before he had the slightest notion that he would ever himself represent an Irish University.

by Byzantine flattery to win power through the favour of an emperor or a prince, will now be found declaiming on platforms about iniquity of privilege, extolling the matchless wisdom and nobility of the masses, systematically trying to excite their passions or their jealousies, and to win them by bribes and flatteries to their side. Many of those who are doing their best to reduce the influence of education and intelligence in English politics are highly cultivated men, who owe to university education all that they are, though they are now imitating—usually with awkward and overstrained effort—the rant of the vulgar demagogue. They have taken their line in public life, and some of them have attained their ends. I do not think that the respect of honest men will form any large part of their reward.' (Vol. i. p. 25.)

The fact is that in every popular constituency it is, and has always been, the case that the majority of electors on the electoral roll must be less educated, less wise, and less capable than a minority of them. In the happy days of the ten-pounders it is absolutely certain that a majority of electors in every constituency in the country was composed of the more ignorant, not of the most educated, portion of the electorate. Nay, in the University of Dublin itself, which has recently done itself honour in returning Mr. Lecky to the House of Commons, do we not find that the men of distinction, the men who have taken honours, the men of wide learning, are far outnumbered by the ruck of those less brilliant beings who have scraped through the examination for an ordinary degree? In Great Britain, at least, political divisions have not been in the past, and are not now, drawn on lines such as these. Here and there it may be the case that a contest has been fought between knowledge and ignorance; but to assert that such a state of things is usual throughout the country as a whole is to give a very incorrect impression of the real play of forces in the constituencies.

For our part, we do not deplore the successive enlargements of the electoral franchise that have taken place since 1832. Reform Bills have not caused that 'democratisation' which has swept over the face of the country. Changed habits of life, changed ways of thinking, universal education, a cheap newspaper press, have arisen amongst us. New forces have been brought into play, and Parliament has done wisely to give them constitutional recognition. In the year 1832 the representation of the people in the House of Commons had become little better than a caricature, and the attempt of the Tory party to perpetuate the old system brought the country to the verge of revolution. But the country did not cease to grow in 1832. On the contrary,

progress became more rapid than ever. The electoral system before 1867, were it in force in 1896, would prove utterly inadequate to represent the real opinion of the people. The constituencies would be found not to 'coincide,' to use Mr. Lecky's expression, with the area of public opinion. 'Few pages,' says Mr. Lecky, with perfect truth, 'in our modern political history are more discreditable than 'the history of the "Conservative" Reform Bill of 1867.' The cynical abandonment of political principle by a great leader and party was, indeed, even more than matched by the action of Mr. Gladstone and the larger portion of the Liberal party in 1886; yet it is interesting to observe that the particular parliamentary action which Mr. Lecky so severely censures was that of a parliament elected upon that very limited suffrage which he himself so highly commends. Parliaments, we are told, have not proved successful, except where they have been founded upon a restricted electoral franchise. Surely it is clear that, in certain stages of national growth, a restricted system will give us the best procurable parliament, whilst at later stages a parliament will neither enjoy general respect itself, nor be able to give power to the Government of its choice, unless it feels that it has behind it the sympathy and support of the bulk of the people. Much is often said in condemnation of the last Reform Act, which abolished the distinction between the county and the borough franchise. That distinction had become an absurd anachronism before it was abolished. The towns had, in many parts of the country, long spread themselves into what were no longer rural districts, except in the contemplation of an Act of Parliament which was out of date; moreover, hundreds of thousands of truly rural householders had in 1885 become as capable of a responsible exercise of the franchise as had been a large proportion of the ten-pounders of 1832. It would be as possible in the present day to maintain a stable English constitution on the older limited franchises as to give renewed vitality to the feudal system.

No one can fairly lay the blame of Mr. Disraeli's betrayal of Conservative principles upon the faulty character of the electorate established by the Act of 1832; neither would it be just to blame household franchise in 1886 for Mr. Gladstone's sudden abandonment of the principles of a lifetime. Indeed, in each of these cases the constituencies condemned the action of the party leader. Mr. Gladstone, it should never be forgotten, possessed up to 1886 an almost unprece-

dented hold over the respect and affection of the masses of his countrymen. To break with the great leader of a lifetime was no easy duty. Yet never again, after the general election of 1885, could the British electorate be induced to trust Mr. Gladstone. They condemned him in 1886 and in 1892, and in 1895 they condemned with a still more terrible condemnation those who, without the protection of his great personality, still advocated the Gladstonian policy, and still pretended to the Liberal name. The events of the years 1867 and 1886 gave, no doubt, a great shock to the public conscience. The 'evil of evils' was not that the *constitutions* had shown themselves unworthy of trust. Can we say as much in those years of our leading statesmen?

Amongst modern nations, France was the earliest to build its political system upon extreme democratic principles. There the great division of landed property has undoubtedly given a basis of stability to popular government which would be wanting elsewhere, whilst the almost stationary number of the people has relieved the State from that pressure of population upon means of subsistence which has so often been the cause of political disturbance. Mr. Lecky's rapid summary of the main lessons to be learned from French experience is worthy of the most careful attention. At the Revolution of 1848, as he reminds us, France passed at a single bound from an electorate of about 225,000 voters to universal manhood suffrage, and it was to this great body of the people that Louis Napoleon directly appealed against the attempt of the Legislative Assembly again to narrow the limits of the electorate. Upon a plebiscite was founded the absolutism of Napoleon III.; and a second plebiscite at the very end of his reign gave at the same time a national ratification to his project of making trial of a more real parliamentary system, and confirmed him in power in spite of the furious denunciations of his foes. Then came the Franco-German War, which, instead of saving the Empire, hurled it to its fall.

'Few things in French history are more mournfully significant than that the streets of Paris were illuminated the night after the disaster of Sedan was known. In the eyes of the party which now ruled the triumph of the Republic more than compensated for the most terrible calamity that had ever befallen their country. One of the principal streets in Paris still bears the name of the Fourth of September, the day when this revolution was accomplished. It is, apparently, still regarded as a day of which they may be proud.' (i. p. 34.)

Twenty-five years have since passed away, and how little has French democracy accomplished to realise the hopes of those who, at the end of the eighteenth century, seemed almost to expect from that political system a new heaven and a new earth! Experience of many systems has taught the world, in this direction at all events, to moderate its expectations; and Mr. Lecky notices, as peculiarly characteristic of our time, the fact that political ideals have lost their power of exciting vehement enthusiasm. It was the favourite charge against the 'bourgeois government' of Louis Philippe that France no longer enjoyed the brilliancy and prominence in Europe that were her due. 'She 'appeared,' according to Lamartine and the leading reformers of his day, 'like a dowdy, ill-dressed figure in the 'concert of nations.' The course of the present Republic has destroyed the fanaticism of 1793, of 1830, and of 1848. Our closer acquaintance with French and American democracy has produced its effect. 'The ideals and utopias 'that float before the popular imagination are of another 'kind. They point rather to great social and industrial 'changes, to redistributions of wealth, to a dissolution of 'the present fabric of society.'

Whilst the recent democratic republicanism of France has been marked by an entire absence of brilliancy, and whilst the instability of its successive administrations has excited the pitying astonishment of Europe, the political system has conspicuously failed in bringing to Frenchmen either an increase of true liberty or a pure and businesslike management of the national affairs. Dependent though the French Government is upon the support of the working classes, legislation in working-class questions has lagged behind that of England. But it is in the financial policy and administration of the two countries that the greatest contrast is to be found. Mr. Lecky, indeed, draws a terrible picture of the indebtedness caused by the calculated extravagance of successive French governments. Here there is no question of painting in too dark colours. Mr. Lecky quotes figures which are beyond dispute, and points to the frequent observations of the most eminent French economists of the day. Frenchmen have established a character throughout the world for the possession of business qualities. They seem to be pre-eminently 'good managers,' and almost by nature frugal. Yet democratic representation has not brought to the front in the management of the national business this strong characteristic of the race. At the end of the Napo-

leonic wars the national debt of defeated France was the merest fraction of the gigantic sum under which victorious England bent. By 1848 about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds a year had been added to the interest of the French debt. It was then about a fourth of the debt of England, and it had increased to a third when, four years later, the Empire started on its career. It was the policy of the Emperor to keep taxes low, and to meet out of loans his gigantic expenditure upon wars and public works. Before the commencement of the war of 1870 the French debt had risen to 500 millions of pounds. Between 1870 and 1874 the German indemnity of 200 millions, and an almost equal amount caused by the war expenditure of the French themselves, were raised by further loans. For a short time, indeed, during the ascendancy of M. Thiers, there prevailed a careful administration of the national finances; but since 1878 a prodigality greater even than that of the Empire began, and has not yet come to an end.

‘The annual debt charge in 1892 was about 50,000,000*l.*, about double the interest of the present debt of Great Britain; and in the twelve years of perfect peace from 1881 to 1892 France increased her debt by 200,000,000*l.*—a sum equal to the whole war indemnity of 1870. And this debt is exclusive of the large and rapidly growing debts of the communes and municipalities.’

It is not merely the military and naval policy of the country that has entailed this gigantic outlay. It is the extravagant expenditure upon unremunerative public works, and it is this that excites the apprehensions of French economists. The great object has been to win the favour of the working classes by giving them employment. Hence

‘these works have been extended to every department, almost to every commune, as a reward for supporting the government. Much of this kind was done, especially at Paris, under the Second Empire; but the system never acquired the enormous extension and extravagance it has assumed under the Republic.’

History has given many examples of governments which, though corrupt, have economically administered the affairs of the nation. Corruption in a great democracy takes, however, a form of necessity more deadly to the national prosperity. Whole classes, not merely individuals, have to be corrupted. Jobs and sinecures were the small cash with which, in other times, statesmen bought support. But now corruption, to be successful, must be on a grander scale.

‘Wars, overgrown armaments, policies that shake credit and plunder large classes, laws that hamper industry, the forms of corruption which

bribe constituencies or classes by great public expenditure, by lavish, partial, unjust taxation—these are the things that really ruin the finances of a nation. To most of these evils unqualified democracies are especially liable.’

Great as are the resources of the French nation, can any country endure for a long series of years extravagance such as this? The Panama scandals have borne melancholy witness to the low tone of public life. And Scherer is quoted to prove that under French democracy extravagance is popular, whilst economy has no friends.

‘Nearly every deputy enters the Chamber encumbered with many promises to individuals. The main object of his policy is usually to secure his election after four years, and the methods by which this may be done are well known. There is the branch line of railroad which must be obtained for the district; there is the fountain that should be erected in the public place; there is, perhaps, even the restoration of the parish church to be effected. But it is not less important that all public offices which carry with them any local influence should be in the hands of his supporters. He therefore at once puts pressure on the government, which usually purchases his support by giving him the patronage he desires. There is a constant shifting in the smaller local offices. Never, it is said, were there so many dismissals and changes in these offices as during the Republic, and they have been mainly due to the desire of the deputies to make room for their supporters or their children. The idea that a vote is a personal favour, establishing a claim to a personal reward, has rapidly spread. At the same time, any vote in favour of public works, and especially public works in his own constituency, any reorganisation that tends to increase the number of men in government employment, increases the popularity of the deputy. The socialistic spirit takes different forms in different countries, and this is the form it seems specially adopting in France.’ (Vol. i. p. 50.)

There, even more than elsewhere, the representative chamber has entirely ceased to be a check on extravagance. A large proportion of the deputies are, beyond all things, ‘agents for instigating to expense.’ The local caucus governs the deputy, who in his turn, under a system of parliamentary groups and weak ministries, exercises exaggerated influence on the administration.

These are the selfish and sordid considerations which prevail under that much-vaunted democratic Republicanism, where orators and poets used to tell Frenchmen to look for the triumph of great ideas and the leadership of great men.

Mr. Lecky now turns his eyes from the democracy of France to that of the United States of America. In recent years the American Constitution has been much studied in Eng-

land, Mr. Bryce and Mr. Albert Dicey having been especially useful in bringing under the notice of their countrymen the more salient differences that exist both in theory and practice between popular government on the two sides of the Atlantic. In its origin, and in the intention of the statesmen who framed it, the American constitution was full of safeguards against the dangers of pure democracy. A constitution placed out of reach of the ordinary jurisdiction of Congress; an executive independent of Congress; a president chosen upon a system designed to give effect to the deliberate wishes of the selected few rather than to the mass vote of the whole people; a Senate whose constitution is a standing protest against the rule of mere numbers; a Supreme Court bound to treat as *ultra vires* such Acts of Congress as it considers in conflict with the constitution--these are mighty limitations on a rash or sudden exercise of power by a numerical majority of the people. It is true that 'democratisation' has done much since 1783. Manhood suffrage--no part of the constitution--has become general through the States. The system by which the president is elected, instead of insuring deliberate selection by men of weight and standing, has become mere machinery for recording the mass vote of the people. In most cases, too, the members of the State legislatures who elect the senators have become mere instruments to give effect to the popular vote, rather than been themselves the electors of the Senate, as was intended.

In England there is no limitation to the power of an Act of Parliament. Parliament--that is, the sovereign and the three estates of the realm--is the most absolute monarch that the world has seen; for its will is law, and those who enforce the law are its servants. Parliament as yet has, however, never been in theory or in fact the instrument of mere numbers. It is the fear that the power of Parliament is becoming monopolised by the House of Commons, and that the House of Commons is itself ceasing to be a free deliberative assembly, and is becoming a mere piece of machinery to register the wishes of a bare majority of an ignorant and often misguided electorate, that is the leading motive of Mr. Lecky's work. In the United States the constitution is safeguarded, and the principal rights of the citizen, as regards his person and his property, are protected from assault by the Legislature. Dare we in England trust our present welfare and our future prosperity to the direct, unchecked, and absolute authority of a House of Commons

which is ceasing to picture the varieties of English thought and feeling and all the diversities of class? However this question may be answered, Mr. Lecky does well to propound it in all its gravity for the consideration of his countrymen. Nothing but good can come of a proper appreciation of the dangers undoubtedly incidental, in a greater or less degree, to democratic government. Whether or not Mr. Lecky has done full justice to the reasons which cause so many of us in the present day to regard the British democracy with more of hope than fear is another matter; as also is the question of the direction in which we should look to protect ourselves against those disasters from which other democracies have suffered.

Mr. Bryce, in his most interesting and admirable account of the working of American constitutions, evidently shares to the full that optimistic belief, so common with Americans themselves, that everything must at last come right with that great democracy. There may be corruption, there may be a low tone in public life, wirepullers may have in their own interests defrauded the people of their rights of self-government—these are all blemishes, most serious blemishes, which for the time being stain the fair face of American democracy. These things will pass away. They will no more ruin the American nation than the corruption under Sir Robert Walpole ruined England. Yet, when Mr. Bryce tells us that ‘the government of the cities is the one conspicuous failure of the United States’—that there is not a large town where the seed of corruption has not sprung into vigorous life—and when Mr. Lecky to this adds his pertinent comment that more than all other nations are the people of the United States becoming a people of townsmen, we feel that the failure of democracy has for the time being been great indeed. Mr. Lecky once took for his theme that truth, so full of import, viz. that the beliefs of different ages are determined, not by the evidence in favour of the beliefs, but by the ‘predisposition to believe’ due to men’s surroundings, to their habits of thought, and the mental developement of the time.* And a similar truth holds as strongly of different individuals as of different ages. The facts of American democracy are before us, they are common ground; but they may be studied from the standpoint of the weeping or of the laughing philosopher, and how different is the result of the study!

* Spirit of Rationalism in Europe.

We cannot afford the space to follow Mr. Lecky through his melancholy account of the corruption that dominates local and national politics in the United States. The accuracy of the picture he draws is, we are afraid, beyond dispute. Jobbing of contracts, abuses of patronage, overcharges for public works, purchases of parks because the owners wish to sell them, are some of the most frequent forms in which the corruption of municipal government has shown itself. It is stated that between 1860 and 1880 the debts of the cities of the Union grew from one hundred to nearly seven hundred millions of dollars; and, according to the New York Commissioners of 1876, 'more than half of all 'the city debts in the United States are the direct results of 'intentional and corrupt misrule.' As regards Congress, Mr. Bryce, with every desire to give the most favourable account he can, has yet described a state of things which, according to the British standard of political morality, is utterly scandalous. How is it, asks the Englishman, that American citizens can tolerate, with a shrug of the shoulders and a smile, so shameful a condition of affairs? Do American electors not value honesty in their public men? Are the people, indeed, suffering from that moral dissolution 'which 'portends the decadence of nations'? Not so, replies Mr. Lecky. 'The truth is,' as has already been shown with regard to France, 'that pure democracy is one of the least 'representative of governments. In hardly any other 'country does the best life and energy of the nation flow so 'habitually apart from politics. Hardly any other nation 'would be more grossly misjudged, if it were mainly judged 'by its politicians and its political life.'

The contempt into which representative bodies have fallen in the United States is a very disheartening result of Transatlantic democracy. That respectable citizens should hold themselves aloof from national and local public affairs as almost necessarily unclean is a portentous evil, and cannot but be fraught with present and future danger to the people. Complete popular representation of the whole people has so long been the means through which people of English blood have sought good government, that it is startling to find the thorough popular distrust now felt in America for representative bodies. Washington is governed by a commission appointed by Congress. There is a growing tendency to give to the mayors of towns almost autocratic authority, and to make each responsible for the good government of his city. The State legislatures are closely

confined within bounds which they cannot break, so that 'a modern State constitution is more like a code of laws than an instrument of representative government.' Even the length of time during which local legislatures shall sit is often strictly limited, out of a feeling that they will treat the public as their prey, and that the public must be on its guard against them. So great is the multiplication of elections that genuine public interest flags in the perpetual rivalry of local nobodies who are seeking their own ends; and the absence of genuine public spirit leaves the field open to the wirepuller, the caucus, and the boss. The 'spoils system,' and the practice of electing judges on a short tenure of office, have done incalculable mischief; and it is satisfactory that some real attempts are now being made to diminish these great causes of abuse.

After noticing the extravagance of French democracy, it would be hardly fair to France or to democracy to leave unnoticed the manner in which the American Republic disposed of the gigantic surpluses produced by high protective duties after the Civil War. It was a magnificent thing, doubtless, to wipe out the huge debt, even though selfish class feeling for protectionism largely assisted that policy; but what term should we apply to the creation of a pension list which contained nearly a million of names, and which involved a payment in 1893 of thirty-three millions of pounds? Mr. Lecky concludes his survey of American democracy as follows:

'It is absolutely essential to its safe working that there should be a written constitution, securing property and contract, placing serious obstacles in the way of organic changes, restricting the power of majorities, and preventing mere outbursts of temporary discontent and mere casual coalitions from overthrowing the main pillars of the State. In America such safeguards are largely and skilfully provided, and to this fact America mainly owes her stability. Unfortunately, in England the men who are doing most to plunge the country into democracy are also the bitter enemies of all these safeguards, by which alone a democratic government can be permanently maintained.'

Montesquieu, were he now to read Mr. Lecky's two volumes, would be confirmed in his old belief that, though either a despotism or an aristocratic government might endure and even thrive without practising much honesty, corruption was necessarily and absolutely fatal to a democracy.

'Il ne faut pas beaucoup de probité pour qu'un gouvernement monarchique ou un gouvernement despotique se maintiennent ou se

soutiennent. La force des lois dans l'un, le bras du prince toujours levé dans l'autre, règlent ou contiennent tout. Mais dans un état populaire, il faut un ressort de plus, qui est la *vertu*.' ('Esprit des Loix,' livre iii.)

Virtue is the root principle of republican government, honour of aristocratic, fear of despotic government.

Such, in the view of the French philosopher, was the teaching of all history, and the century and a half that has elapsed since he wrote, and contemporary experience, have, if Mr. Lecky is correct, combined to give additional truth and importance to the lesson. If the people are really corrupt, and have become indifferent to the character and to the high reputation of their public men, we cannot imagine any constitutional provisions which will long preserve from disaster the democratic state. On the other hand, if the bulk of the people is sound at heart whilst corruption has tainted the few, if there is reason to suppose that corruption even where widely suspected is rather a passing ailment than a permanent disease of the body politic, surely the hope is not an unreasonable one that the democratic state may shake itself free from a vice which, if specially deadly to such a constitution, has equally affected other forms of government. The parliamentary system is not to be condemned root and branch because the House of Commons of Sir Robert Walpole suffered from the plague of corruption. A strong hereditary monarchy may at certain periods and under certain circumstances have proved itself a good form of government, though of necessity the system involves the not infrequent rule of bad and foolish kings. Because there is much corruption amongst politicians in France and America, because the tone of political life in England is lower than it should be, because in Ireland an electorate has been created where the voters are largely wanting in the individual independence and political education necessary for self-government and now usual in England, must we despair altogether of democratic government in the United Kingdom? During the last hundred years it cannot be said that it is democratic government alone that has failed in France. In that time there has been no system which, to Englishmen at all events, would have been satisfactory or tolerable. Personal, parliamentary, democratic rule have all been tried and tried again, and each has but proved the prelude to further revolution. In America democracy preserved the unity of the nation through a time of trial and danger as great as

any that have ever befallen a people. The American Constitution is the most permanent and the least subject to change of all the political systems of the Western nations, and this, we believe, is due far less to specific provisions of the Constitution itself making it difficult to alter it than to the fact that it conforms to the sentiments of the people—that they feel that it is *their* Constitution, the great monument of their independent nationhood, endeared to them by all those sentiments which the events and the statesmen of the early life of the Republic have naturally called forth in later generations.

It is certainly curious to notice the different place that the American Constitution has of late years come to occupy in the political speculations of Englishmen. The charge of ‘Americanising’ English institutions was fatal to the Reform Bill of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone in 1866. This was, indeed, the stock phrase always employed against every attempt of reformers to advance on the path of democracy. Now it is to the American Constitution that Conservatives point as containing far better safeguards than our own against the action of unscrupulous demagogues or an outburst of popular recklessness.

Whether we have been on the right path or the wrong one, it cannot be said that we have accepted democracy in England without having been first fully warned of the evils and dangers which it would entail. Mr. Lowe in 1866 and 1867 was as gloomy in his anticipations as had been the Duke of Wellington a generation earlier. Another generation has now passed, yet the ‘gentlemen of England’ are still found to exist in the House of Commons, and to be something more than a mere survival of a bygone age. They still have, it is to be presumed, ‘their ancestry behind them and their posterity before them.’ Yet these—to say nothing of their ‘estates’—were being ‘flung away’ in the mad surrender to democracy of 1867! Mr. Lowe feared a repudiation of the National Debt. The democratic Parliaments that have succeeded that fatal measure have paid off some 200,000,000*l.* of that debt! Corruption of the electorate would flourish under a wide franchise to an unheard-of extent. The democratic Parliament passes a draconic law against bribery! The trial of election petitions shows, at least, that the corruption of voters in the old gross form of hard cash payments for votes has become largely a thing of the past. Taxation would be imposed by the poor upon the rich till capital had fled the country. Yet it is from this

democratic England that capital flows out as from a great reservoir to refresh and to fertilise every quarter of the globe. Events have proved that Mr. Bright was a far truer prophet than Mr. Lowe, and for the simple reason that the former understood far better than the latter the force of character and true temper of his own countrymen. Even those who welcomed the coming democracy, like John Stuart Mill, thought that the sameness, the dulness, the uniformity, that it would produce in our representative assemblies would be strongly marked. Who would look in a purely democratic House of Commons for those outstanding figures of great men who had made its glory in the past? In the dead plain of the coming democracy 'every molehill would be a 'mountain and every thistle a forest tree.'

We have recalled the gloomy prophecies of our anti-reformers in the past, and have noticed the doubts expressed even by those who were ready to give a hearty welcome to the coming democracy. We have also set out in considerable fulness Mr. Locky's account of the gross evils that accompany the democratic system in France and in America. It may now be useful to consider how far our own experience has fulfilled the prophecies, and how far our own political life is becoming affected with the diseases so rampant in other countries.

It is right to be on our guard against excessive national self-complacency, but surely any one with the least experience of political life in England must be struck with the contrast between the French député and the English M.P., between the English House of Commons and the United States House of Representatives. There is here no 'spoils system.' The English member possesses no patronage whatever. Members of Parliament are not paid. Except in some few seats which might be reckoned on the fingers, constituents have no private gain to look to from the party success of any candidate. The 'spoils system,' 'the election of judges,' the 'corruption 'of representatives,' the expenditure of national funds upon public works in the constituencies, the abstention of the higher classes from political life, are evils of which the people of Great Britain have no experience. The French député has, we are told, no chance of the renewed confidence of his constituents after a four years' trial unless he secures the spending amongst them of national funds. Mr. Charles Villiers has sat for more than sixty years member for Wolverhampton without any elector dreaming of extracting

pecuniary profit from a connexion so honourable both to representative and represented.

Has the wide franchise produced a House of Commons of a type inferior to those of earlier days? To us it seems that its composition, instead of being more uniform, more monotonous, than heretofore, is more varied. And it can hardly be that, as a representative assembly, it does not gain in character from the presence within its walls of members themselves drawn from very various classes of the community. It would be a national misfortune were the House of Commons constituted of precisely the same elements as a West End London Club. It would be in every way a less useful, less powerful, less respected, less interesting assembly than it now is. Is, however, the House of Commons, the creation of British democracy, open to the fatal charge that it does not represent the most characteristic qualities of Englishmen; that it does not bring to the front, to take the lead in public life, the Englishmen whose characters and abilities best fit them to lead the nation? Do men take to politics in England because they think they can succeed as 'politicians' in making a career which they could never achieve in the competition of business or professional life? There can be no doubt of the answer to such questions as these. Our chief 'politicians' are men who, apart altogether from their House of Commons position, are men of distinction. Each of them is somebody in himself, and something much more than the mere puppet of a caucus. At the present moment, is it at all certain that those who sit on the Government and Front Opposition benches are not fully up to the standard in character and ability of their predecessors in any previous Parliament? Is it at all certain that the general level of the representatives chosen by the British democracy of 1896 is inferior in any true sense to the level maintained before 1868? Degeneration may be coming upon the House of Commons of the future. We lay no claim to the gift of prophecy. There are evil influences at work, as there always have been, which, if they were to prevail, would undoubtedly permanently lower the character of the House of Commons in the eyes of men, and inflict thereby the most deadly injury upon the nation. No improved second chamber, no introduction of the Referendum, no written constitution, will ever give real protection against a degenerate House of Commons. Mr. Lecky renders the highest possible service to his countrymen in pointing out where in the present day these dangers lie—

corruption on a grand scale of whole classes at once by promises of legal plunder, and the subserviency of the electorate and of public men to the arts of self-interested wirepullers. Our belief is that as yet these influences do not prevail to such an extent as to have degraded the House of Commons below its level in former days.

We certainly have no desire to make excuses for the conduct of the late House of Commons; but it would be a mistake to forget the thoroughly exceptional conditions under which it was born and under which it spent its unhappy three years of existence. Mr. Lecky lays too much blame for its undoubted shortcomings upon the electorate. One great party in the State had been rent in twain, and there was but little experienced and responsible statesmanship left amongst the majority to lead the House of Commons — a disastrous condition of affairs which might occur for a limited time with a restricted as well as with a wide electoral franchise.

‘The House of Commons,’ Mr. Lecky reminds us, ‘that sat from 1892 to 1896 passed a Bill placing the government of Ireland in the hands of a separate Parliament, at the same time leaving a powerful contingent of eighty Irish members in the Parliament at Westminster. It passed a vote in favour of the establishment of a separate Parliament in Scotland: it passed another vote in favour of breaking up the British Isles into a federation with a number of distinct legislatures. It carried by a small majority, though it afterwards rescinded, an amendment to the Address in March 1891, praying her Majesty that “the power now enjoyed by persons not elected to Parliament by the possession of the parliamentary franchise to prevent bills being submitted to your Majesty for your royal approval shall cease,” and expressing a hope that “if it be necessary your Majesty will, with and by the advice of your responsible ministers, use the powers vested in your Majesty to secure the passing of this much-needed reform.”’ (Vol. i. p. 359.)

A House of Commons so entirely wanting in all sense of responsibility and self-respect, naturally fell rapidly into great discredit with the public. For two years it was kept in existence with no hope of accomplishing its proper work, but in order to force a quarrel upon the House of Lords, out of which the wirepulling advisers of the Ministry imagined that party advantages might arise. The noble policy of ‘filling up the cup’ failed, as it deserved to fail. The House of Commons had made itself the mere instrument of party tactics. The electorate repudiated the Ministry, the House of Commons, and all their works. Could the ten-pounders of happy memory have done more?

The three years of the late Parliament had their lesson ; but we do not think they afforded evidence of a degenerating electorate, or of what must result from such degeneracy, a permanent lowering of the House of Commons. On the other hand, if proof were wanted, none more conclusive need be cited than the years 1892-1896, of the absolute necessity of the second chamber. If ever the will of the British people was mocked, it was mocked by the pretension of that remarkable House of Commons to pose as its exponent.

Few thoughtful men will differ with Mr. Lecky as to the danger to our parliamentary constitution from the possibility of the whole power and authority of Parliament becoming vested in a single representative chamber. The unwisdom of placing the whole of our laws and liberties under the uncontrolled sway of the House of Commons hardly needs to be demonstrated. That chamber has been for long and rightly the predominant branch of the Legislature, but it has never been the Legislature itself. It has never enjoyed absolute authority. If, as seems to be the intention of the Home Rule party, all power is to be withdrawn from the House of Lords, the House of Commons will be synonymous with Parliament, and a resolution of the House of Commons will be virtually equivalent to an Act of Parliament. It is strange that any statesman should be willing to make the House of Commons the absolute master of the Constitution and of the nation. It could, of course, be bound by no Act of Parliament. The Septennial Act, for instance, would be no security whatever for a general election every seven years. The majority, perhaps merely a chance majority, and certainly nothing more than the reflexion of the popular will at a particular time, would be enthroned as absolute monarch for as long as it chose to prolong its own existence. We are, however, at least so it seems to us, very unlikely to accept so profound a modification of our Constitution. We have at present a second chamber, and we are likely to maintain one, adapting, no doubt, as time goes on, its character and composition to meet the requirements and satisfy the sentiments of the day. Whilst the second chamber exists as a reality ; whilst it is worth preserving at all as a checking and revising branch of the Legislature, it is altogether premature to advocate such fundamental changes in our whole political system as the introduction of the ' Referendum,' or the framing of a written constitution, intended, by requiring a two-thirds majority, or by

similar provisions, to tie up the powers of the House of Commons.

For our own part, we entirely disbelieve in these remedies; and their advocacy tends to divert public attention from the direction in which our Constitution really needs revising. In an evil moment for his reputation Lord Rosebery flung aside his policy of reforming the House of Lords, in favour of the policy of diminishing or destroying its authority. Other statesmen, some day, will take up the policy which he has discarded, and a reformed and renovated House of Lords will add strength and usefulness to the parliamentary institutions of the country.

Mr. Lecky has several suggestions to make for obtaining a more satisfactory second chamber than the existing House of Lords. That chamber possesses the merit of knowing when it is wise, as regards measures in which the public is deeply interested, to subordinate its own opinions to the general demand. As to measures of minor interest, the House of Lords has frequently shown itself influenced by a narrowness of vision long outgrown by intelligent public opinion; and perhaps as strong an instance of this obduracy as can be found is the perpetual refusal of that House to legalise marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Every House of Commons, whether Conservative or Liberal, has for many years past approved the proposed change, and has shown itself ready to bring the law of the United Kingdom into conformity on that point with the laws of our colonial empire, of the United States of America, and of the chief Protestant countries of Europe. In Roman Catholic countries these marriages are permitted, though subject, like the marriages between cousins, to the necessity of dispensation.

The action of the House of Lords is, as Mr. Lecky states, opposed to the true interests of morals and of family life—

‘and in an age when most wise and patriotic men desire that the influence and character of the Upper House should be upheld and strengthened, few things can be more deplorable than that this House should have suffered itself to be made the representative of a swiftly vanishing superstition, the chief instrument in perpetuating a paltry and ignoble persecution.’

The direction in which Mr. Lecky looks for a reformed Upper House is by the introduction of the system of election amongst the peers themselves, a principle already recognised in the peerages of Scotland and Ireland; though a proportional system of representation would, of course, have to be

adopted. In this way the hereditary peers might be reduced to about a hundred, and peers not selected to sit in the House of Lords should be eligible for the House of Commons. Life peers in considerable though limited numbers should be introduced, and perhaps representatives of the large municipalities and county councils should be admitted. Ministers should be permitted to make statements in either House of Parliament—in our opinion a change of very doubtful expediency. He would also substitute a limited for an absolute veto upon bills passed by the House of Commons.

An aristocracy closely connected with political life is, Mr. Lecky thinks, highly advantageous to the State. Even socially the worship of rank is a by no means useless check upon the worship of wealth; and as the latter appears to be an inevitable characteristic of Anglo-Saxon democracy, the existence of the former as a species of counter-irritant is not to be altogether deprecated. Besides, the peers are ornamental persons eminently fitted 'to preside' on all sorts of show occasions, a burdensome function which, but for them, would largely fall upon the shoulders of men of letters.* Our Constitution and our practice certainly associate prominent position with public duties, and this is an advantage which it is difficult to rate too highly.

When we turn to the suggestion of a written constitution by which the hands of Parliament are to be tied, or to the introduction of the system of a referendum, we find ourselves at once in a different region of thought. How can we get either the one or the other? How can one Parliament bind future Parliaments? Except on the supposition that there is a strong second chamber, how could the Representative House be compelled to refer its projects to the vote of the people? And if there is an adequate and strong second chamber, is there any reason for such a reference? Suppose, again, it were thought desirable that measures of a specially fundamental character should not pass the House of Commons without the support of a majority of two-thirds of its members, how would it be possible to give effect to such a provision? Would any House of Commons so tie its own hands, or could it so tie the hands of its successors? Clearly not. But our objections to projects of this kind go far beyond the evident difficulty of accomplishing them. There may be danger and not safety to the State in limiting the authority of Parliament. Of course, if the advisers of

* Vol. i. p. 108.

the Crown, the ministers trusted by the House of Commons, are in truth dangerous persons, seeking almost solely their own objects, plundering 'the classes' in order to win the votes of 'the masses,' and supported by a majority of unscrupulous politicians, themselves the mere puppets of a caucus, it is time to find some strong remedy. Parliament is at present absolute sovereign, and if that sovereign is mad we must try, however difficult, to force him into a strait waistcoat. If, on the other hand, Cabinets and Parliaments are composed in the main of responsible and honourable men, very great danger may arise to the State from the artificial restriction of their powers. When we are told that the Irish Land Act of 1882 could not have been passed by a Parliament limited after the fashion of Congress, the question arises whether, bearing in mind the revolutionary crisis through which Ireland was passing, the incapacity of Parliament might not have been productive of most terrible disasters in that country, and of far greater loss to the landlords than that which they actually suffered.

The demand for the Referendum springs from the same cause—viz. a profound distrust of Parliament. Oddly enough the proposal to submit Bills in their entirety to the direct vote, aye or no, of the electorate, is made by men who have the lowest possible opinion of the capacity of voters to perform, wisely and patriotically, the far more simple political functions now incumbent upon them. We are told of the gross ignorance and recklessness of the electorate, yet it is to this electorate that an appeal is to lie from what used to be known as the wisdom of Parliament. It is proposed that measures of fundamental importance, affecting the Constitution or the liberty or property of citizens, should not become law, though passed by Parliament, unless they are afterwards ratified by a direct vote of the electors in favour of the measures themselves. Under such a system when would the Catholic Emancipation Act have been passed, or the Poor Law of 1834? Imagine the average English elector in the past voting aye or no upon such a measure as the Irish Land Act of 1882, or imagine him in the future voting aye or no upon the question of a bimetallic currency! Mr. Lecky tells us that in the State politics of the United States there is a 'strong tendency 'running in favour of a substitution of direct popular 'legislation for legislation through the medium of representative bodies.' This is the natural developement of the principle involved in the Referendum. It is claimed as an

advantage of the system that the nation might by this means reject a measure without destroying a ministry.

‘The vote would be not on the general policy of the Government. It would be exclusively on the merits of a single measure, and it would leave the ministerial majority in the House of Commons unchanged. Few persons will doubt that a measure brought in this manner before the electorate would be voted on with a much fuller consideration and a much more serious sense of responsibility than if it came before them mixed up with a crowd of other measures, and inseparably connected with a party issue. . . . By the Referendum the electorate can give its deliberate opinion, not upon men but upon measures, and can reject a measure without placing the government of the country in other hands.’

With this reasoning we cannot agree. Of course if the six and a half millions of electors can legislate more wisely for themselves than their representatives can legislate for them, Parliament, so far as its legislative functions are concerned, has become a useless anachronism, and may as well be dispensed with. For our own part we do not believe in the possibility of six and a half millions of people themselves accomplishing their own legislation. How many electors would vote at all under the present system, if party preferences or personal preferences for candidates or leading statesmen did not enter into the question to be answered in the ballot-box? It seems to be supposed that if these influences were cut off we should then get the real mind of the nation upon the merits of the particular measure. We greatly doubt whether any substantial vote would be obtained at all. British householders are fully competent to elect representatives, but they are not competent to do the work hitherto done by members of Parliament, and take the business of direct legislation into their own hands.

The adoption of the principle of the Referendum means the deathblow to the parliamentary system of government. ‘The whole position of the legislative bodies in Switzerland,’ says Mr. Lecky,* ‘is lowered by the Referendum.’ And it is easy to see that this must necessarily be so. One of the chief merits of the parliamentary system is that whilst it gives to a wide electorate a true sense of their ultimate power, it places responsibility upon the shoulders of the representatives and turns upon them the full light of public opinion. The personal responsibility of our statesmen for the good government of the country to Parliament and to public

* Vol. i. p. 376.

opinion is the very essence of our system. It is eminently desirable that if a ministry cannot pass into law measures of the first class, such as it considers essential to the welfare of the country, it should be succeeded by another ministry of different views. Under the Referendum the measures would be lost, we are told, and the ministry retained. This is an argument against, not in favour of, the Referendum. It shows how inevitably it would remove from the shoulders of the statesmen who govern the country that full responsibility which it is essential should rest upon them. Let us apply the system to recent events. Home Rule statesmen declare Home Rule essential to the welfare of the kingdom. Parliament passes a Home Rule Bill, which is then vetoed by the direct vote of the electorate. The Home Rule ministry remains in office to govern the country upon that system of the Union in which it entirely disbelieves. Surely it is better that if the Unionist principle is to be maintained Unionist statesmen should govern, and that if Home Rule legislation is to be passed Home Rule statesmen should have the satisfaction of working the constitution of their own devising.

This objection to the Referendum, we are aware, is an objection also to that much-lauded system of the United States where the ministry is not directly dependent on Congress. But it is precisely in the sense of responsibility that American statesmen and chambers appear to English observers to be deficient. Even a president will behave with a recklessness impossible to a modern English premier acting under the eyes of an active opposition; and naturally no great responsibility weighs upon the Senate or the House of Representatives in passing resolutions which, if the president thinks them unwise, will remain entirely inoperative.

The whole system of national and local government, as we know it in England, hinges on the personal responsibility of the governors to the governed. County councils, school boards, parish councils, local boards, are composed of known persons, who are called upon to justify every act of local government. It is one of the strongest reasons against the Local Veto Bill, the principle of which is direct popular legislation, that it puts an end to this personal responsibility as regards a very important branch of local administration. The English elector has always had regard to the person as well as to the policy for which he is voting; and it would be a mistake to dissociate his political objects from

the choice of responsible men to carry them out. It is, on the whole, in the latter aspect that the great success of the representative system in England has been achieved. It would be a most unwise step to relieve a ministry or the House of Commons from the least tittle of responsibility, and to throw the burden directly on the masses.

We believe that when in after years the history of England during the last quarter of the nineteenth century comes under review, no unfavourable contrast will be drawn between the ministries and parliaments of this and of earlier periods. Historians, writing at a distance from the conflicts and exaggerations of our own time, and judging calmly of the results achieved, will find little reason for holding that the advance of democracy has endangered the highest interests of the State. On the contrary, it will be found to have given strength to the law, to have made infinitely less possible than formerly violent revolution, and to have forced even the most revolutionary spirits to seek their ends by means of constitutional reform. How great a gain this is the present generation hardly realises. Insensibly we have all come to believe in the futility of violence against the State. Riots and public disorders have become almost unknown amongst us. The mouthing mob orator has ceased to exist, or, at all events, he now finds no mob, worth considering, to listen to him. His place has been taken by the party candidate, by the Cabinet or ex-Cabinet Minister. These gentlemen spend a large portion of their time 'upon the stump.' They speak with great frequency, discuss their opponents with point and freedom, and their own topics with endless and often wearisome repetition. Their speeches are never inflammatory, and rarely, except to a pronounced partisan, are they even exciting. Speeches outside Parliament are much more business-like than they once were, partly because the audience now consists largely of responsible electors, partly because the orators are aware that what they say in warm blood will be read next day in cool blood both by friends and opponents.

It is contended, however, that the danger to the State now comes from within, and that it is from the hand of Parliament itself that fatal blows at the true interest and welfare of the nation are to be feared. The rule of mere numbers, it is said, now prevails. The few 'Haves' will be taxed by the many 'Have nots.' Capital will leave the country, and a socialism inconsistent with personal liberty

interest the rural peasant woman who from year's end to year's end never looks at a newspaper—how to canvass the London lodger. Even at present there is far too little sense of responsibility amongst candidates and their active supporters, as well as amongst the electors themselves. We are afraid the female voter would, on the whole, add to the frivolous element in political warfare, and that the tone of electioneering, none too high at present, would be further lowered.

In Mr. Lecky's opinion the violence with which ladies have discussed the question of vivisection has done harm to the cause of the enfranchisement of their sex. But perhaps the almost childish absurdities that have characterised their principal political organisations, the sham grades and ranks and mock badges, their tea meetings and trivialities—in short, their playing at politics—have done even more to make men doubt whether their admission to the register would add a really valuable element to the electorate.

Mr. Lecky's range of subjects is so wide that it is impossible to give in our limited space a comprehensive account of these most interesting volumes. There is hardly a page which does not afford food for reflection to all whose interest in politics is not confined to the party struggles, the victories and defeats, of the passing day. Partisans of this kind will naturally search Mr. Lecky's work merely to find arguments and observations which they may make use of against their political opponents; and in it they will see nothing but a polemical pamphlet of unusual proportions. Nevertheless '*Democracy and Liberty*' will take its place amongst the best works of political philosophy. It will be studied by all political thinkers of the present day and for many years to come, and its vigorous denunciations of the shortcomings and vices which endanger in a special degree the democratic system of government will help to turn the attention of Englishmen to the best means of eradicating them, or of guarding against them.

If Mr. Lecky is right in thinking that parliamentary government in England has entered on a period of decadence, it is satisfactory to find that he does not believe in any general decadence 'in the national character.' He holds, and gives strong reasons for holding, that 'on the whole 'English character has improved.' When once Englishmen escape from 'the interference and contagion of a democratic 'parliament,' their high qualities shine as brightly as in former times. In India and in Egypt men of our own

generation have done as good work as was ever done by their ancestors. In art, in science, in literature, in inventions and discoveries, in every form of enterprise and philanthropy, the English race of to-day fully holds its own. It has produced a Darwin and a Gordon. A country capable of producing men and works such as these 'does not seem to be in a condition of general decadence, though its constitution is plainly worn out, though the balance of power within it has been destroyed, and though diseases of a serious character are fast growing in its political life.'*

We cannot help thinking that Mr. Lecky, as an Irishman and a close observer of Irish politics, has allowed his Irish experience to colour too strongly his opinion of democratic government in general. Whatever the reason may be, Irishmen, whether at home or in America, have not afforded a happy example of the working of popular institutions. It must be remembered that the Irish electorate in political education and independence is a generation or more behind that of England. It falls an easy prey to the arts of the professional politician. It yields to the leadership or succumbs to the threats of an ignorant and often disaffected priesthood. When in 1885 the time had arrived for enlarging the electoral franchise of England and Scotland, our statesmen chose on the whole the wiser part in advancing Ireland rather than in retarding Great Britain; for no one acquainted with the forces of public opinion in England, to say nothing of Ireland, could suppose that the exclusion of Ireland from the last Reform Act would have been productive of anything but endless trouble and difficulty. It is an evil, which ought to be remedied, that the least competent portion of the electorate of the United Kingdom is represented in the House of Commons out of all proportion to its real strength. More than one fifth of the Irish electorate vote as 'illiterates,' whilst in Great Britain the illiterate voter is about one per cent. Yet whilst every 7,000 Irish electors return a member to Parliament, it requires 10,000 Englishmen to enjoy the same privilege!

A large part of Mr. Lecky's book is devoted to Irish questions. His discussion of Irish land legislation cannot be adequately treated in the present article; but we feel bound to say that his strong Irish feelings make him occasionally less than just to the objects and motives of English statesmanship. In 1881-82 something very like a general

* See vol. i. pp. 204-212.

strike against rent was in sight. The legal property of the landlords was in great peril. A *modus vivendi* had to be found. The peace had to be preserved. The methods adopted by Parliament then and subsequently, viz. the establishment of rent courts and the conversion of tenants into proprietors, undoubtedly involved a great disturbance of private rights of property. The legal rights of landlords in general were injuriously affected; but the holder under a parliamentary title had no greater right than any other landlord to be exempt from the new system which Parliament was imposing. It was not a question of *title*. The Act was intended to regulate on a new footing the relations between the owners and the occupants of the land; and to judge of the wisdom and the justice of the policy pursued, account must be taken of the facts of the case, and of the customs and practice on well and ill managed Irish estates, as well as of the letter of the law. Another generation will judge more calmly of the results of the legislation of 1882; and the whole matter cannot be disposed of by sweeping allegations of the plundering tendencies of agitators and the predatory methods of democratic statesmanship.

Let us return to the general purpose of these interesting volumes. Democracy, we are told, as the rule of mere numbers, is destroying parliamentaryism. Socialism is destroying individual liberty, and doubtless the socialistic theory, if it could be carried into practice, would involve a more monstrous bureaucratic tyranny than the world has yet seen. It is quite true that the tendency of the day is to disregard the liberty of minorities and individuals. Advocates of the Eight Hours Bill and of the Permissive Bill are ready enough to apply compulsion to those who are more industrious or more thirsty than themselves. But is it not infinitely probable that a very small trial of tyrannical rule will cause a reaction in the public mind against arbitrary methods long before any really socialistic scheme of government comes within measurable distance of practical politics?

Our Constitution, it must be remembered, is much more democratic in form than in fact. Every man a vote, and every vote of equal value, is a phrase which, at all events, the practical electioneerer rates at its true value. We have always to bear in mind facts, as well as the letter of the law. Constitutionally a single shepherd on the Pentland Hills or a single miner in Dalkeith, as the possessor of a vote, has more power than the unenfranchised Lord Rosebery to return a member for Midlothian. Readers of

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